ALL ABOUT HISTORY

Battle of Britain

10 forgotten heroes from World War II's fight for the skies

ALFRED VS VIKINGS

The king's crusade to rid England of the raiders

GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY

The impossible escapades of Ronnie Biggs

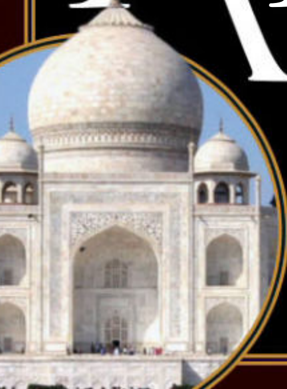
+

Battle of Bosworth
Miners' strike
Edwardian safari
Ancient Rome
Thomas Cook

THE HATED QUEEN

MARIE ANTOINETTE

- How the House of Bourbon fell from glory to guillotine
- Roots of the French Revolution
- Who were Les Misérables?



Mysteries of the Taj Mahal

The love story behind the world's grandest tomb

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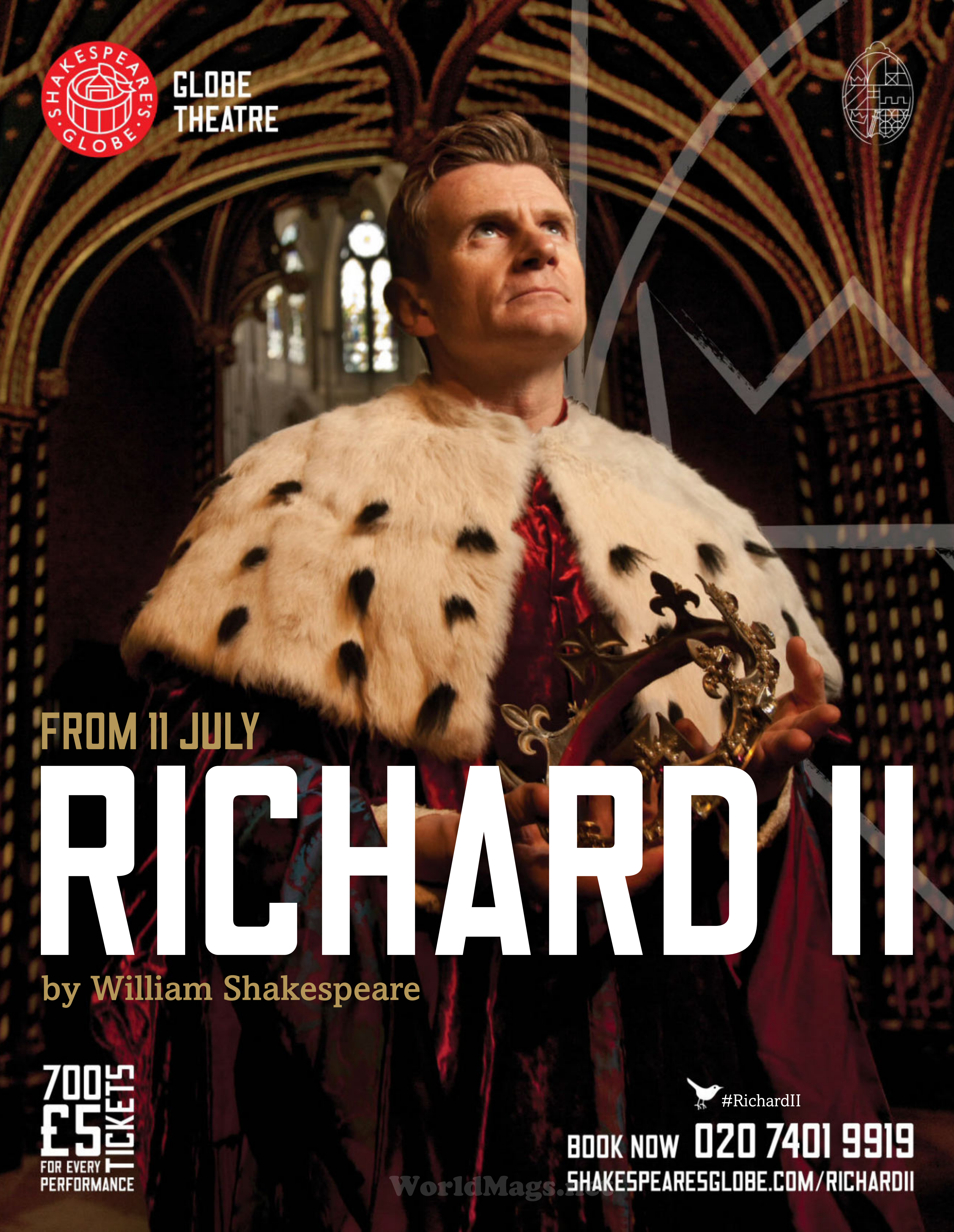
Sex, murder & voodoo

Inside the sinful inferno of jazz age New Orleans



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Turn to page 38 to get the need-to-know facts on the UK miners' strike

Welcome

The theatre adaptation of Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* has seen sell-out performances worldwide, and the 2012 film made millions at the box office. But very few of us have heard the story of the French Revolution from the other side: the one of the royal family. On page 30 we tell the tragic tale of Marie Antoinette, who began her reign as the nation's sweetheart but ended it as the most hated woman in France.

Meanwhile, on page 70 we commemorate 75 years since the Battle of Britain with a special feature on its forgotten heroes, from the man with tin legs who tipped the balance in the Allies' favour, to a corporal who endured the flames of her bombed-out operations room to pass on vital information. Then, on page 80, we reveal how Alfred the Great defended his kingdom from the Vikings, while on page 56 you can get inside jazz age New Orleans.

And in case you haven't already, don't forget to follow us on our new free app Just A Score, where you can rate anything from museums to the latest issue of **All About History**.

Alicea

Alicea Francis
Deputy Editor

Editor's picks

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Secrets of the Taj Mahal
Writer and historian John Man tells the tale of Mughal emperor Shah Jahan, and explains why he built the grandest tomb the world has ever seen.

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Ronnie Biggs
Follow the impossible escapades of the infamous Great Train Robbery fugitive, and discover how he managed to run from the law for so long.

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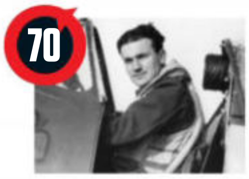

Battle of Britain
We shortlist ten of the many brave men and women who fought in the battle for the skies, revealing their acts of heroism and sacrifice.

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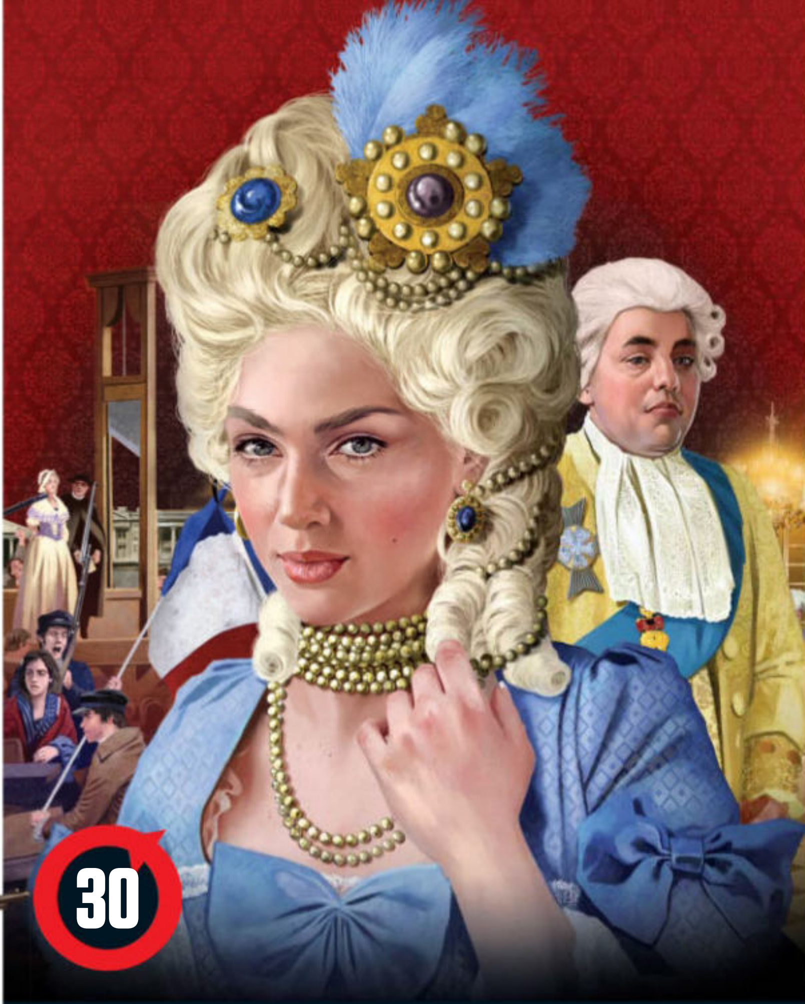

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75 years on, we celebrate the fearless fighters who took on the Nazis

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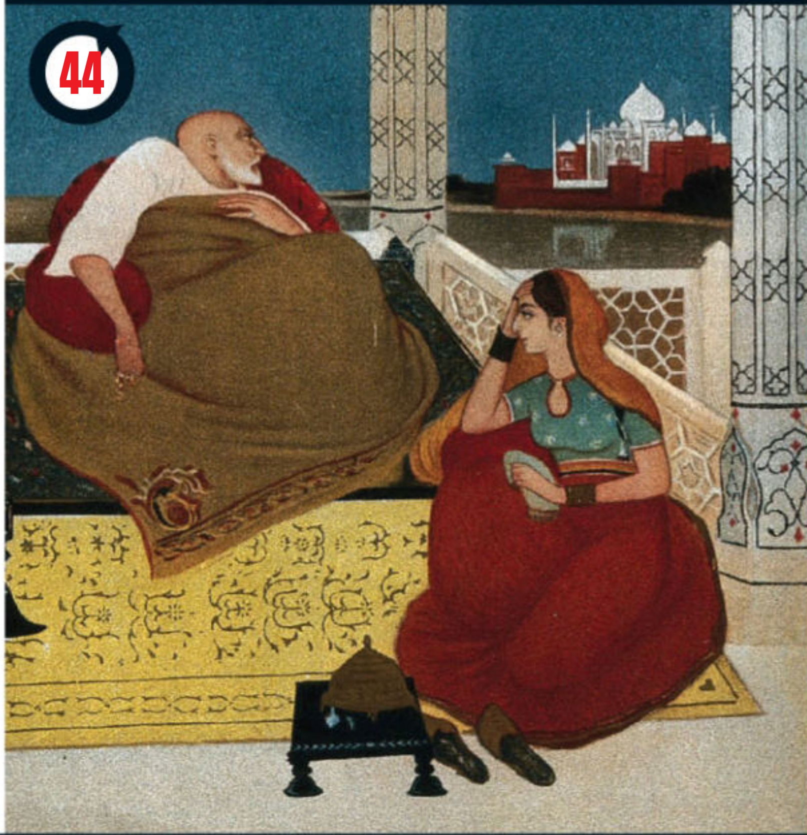

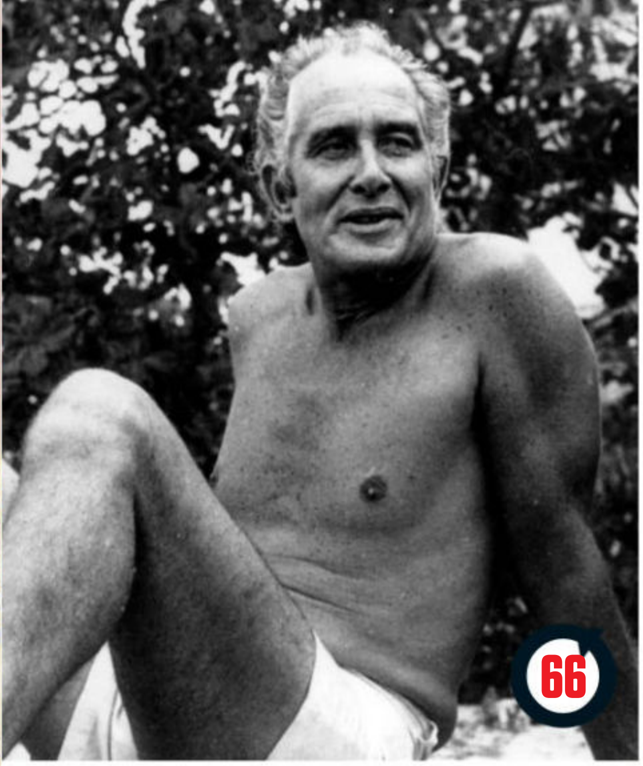

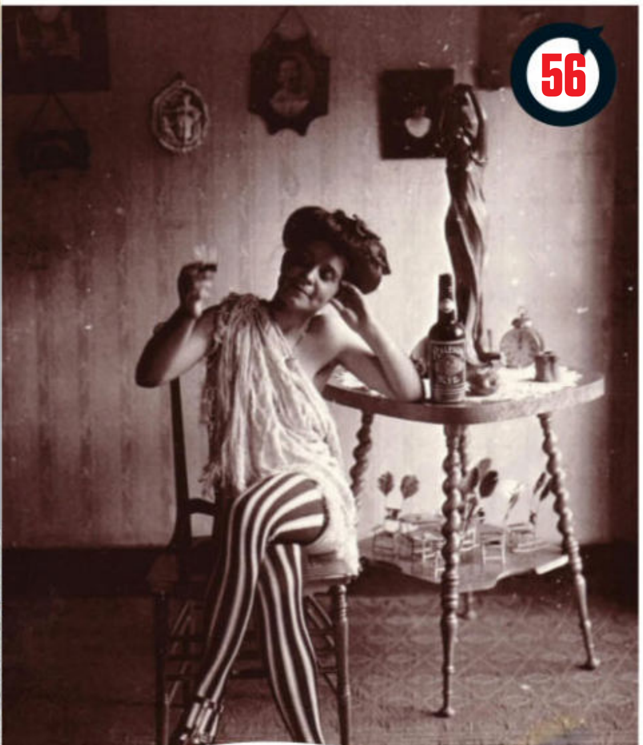

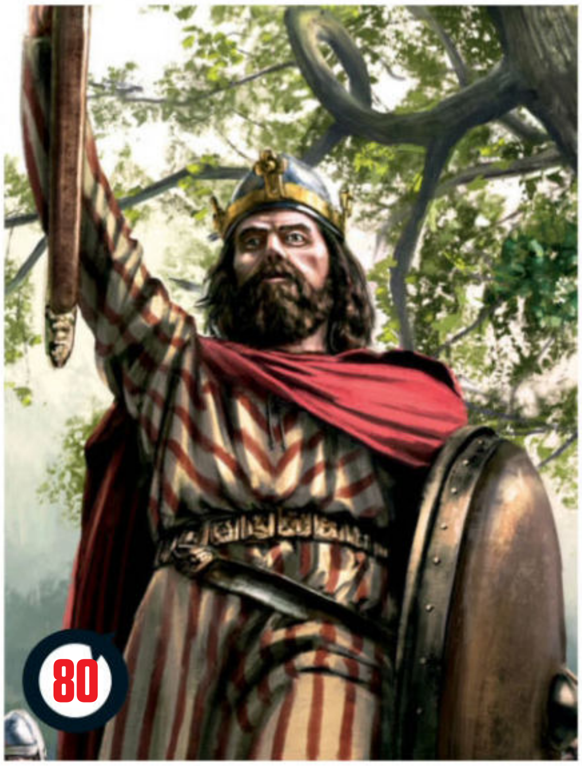

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With the future of the British Isles at stake, the bloody Battle of Bosworth would cost King Richard III his life

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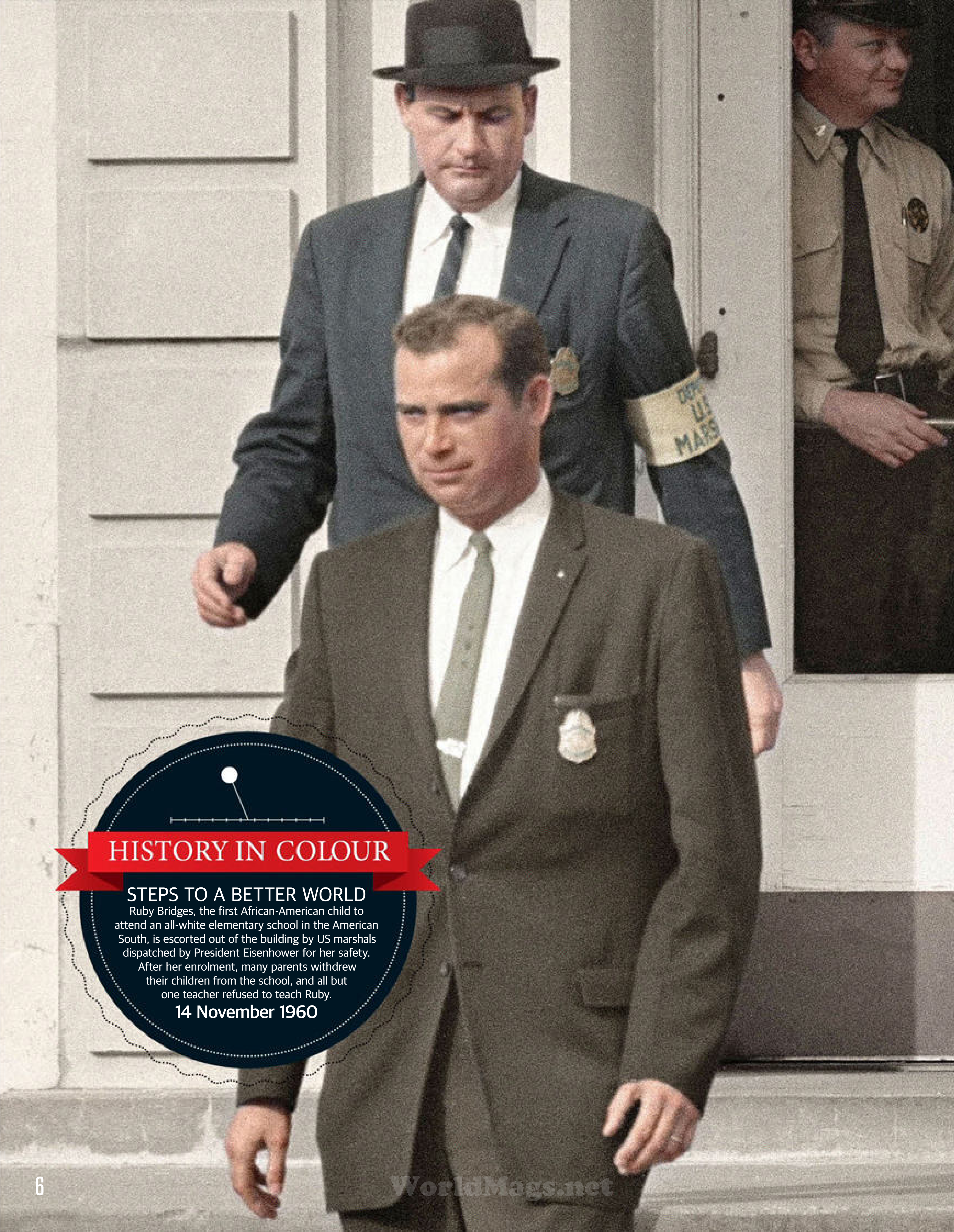
ALL ABOUT HISTORY
MARIE ANTOINETTE



HISTORY IN COLOUR

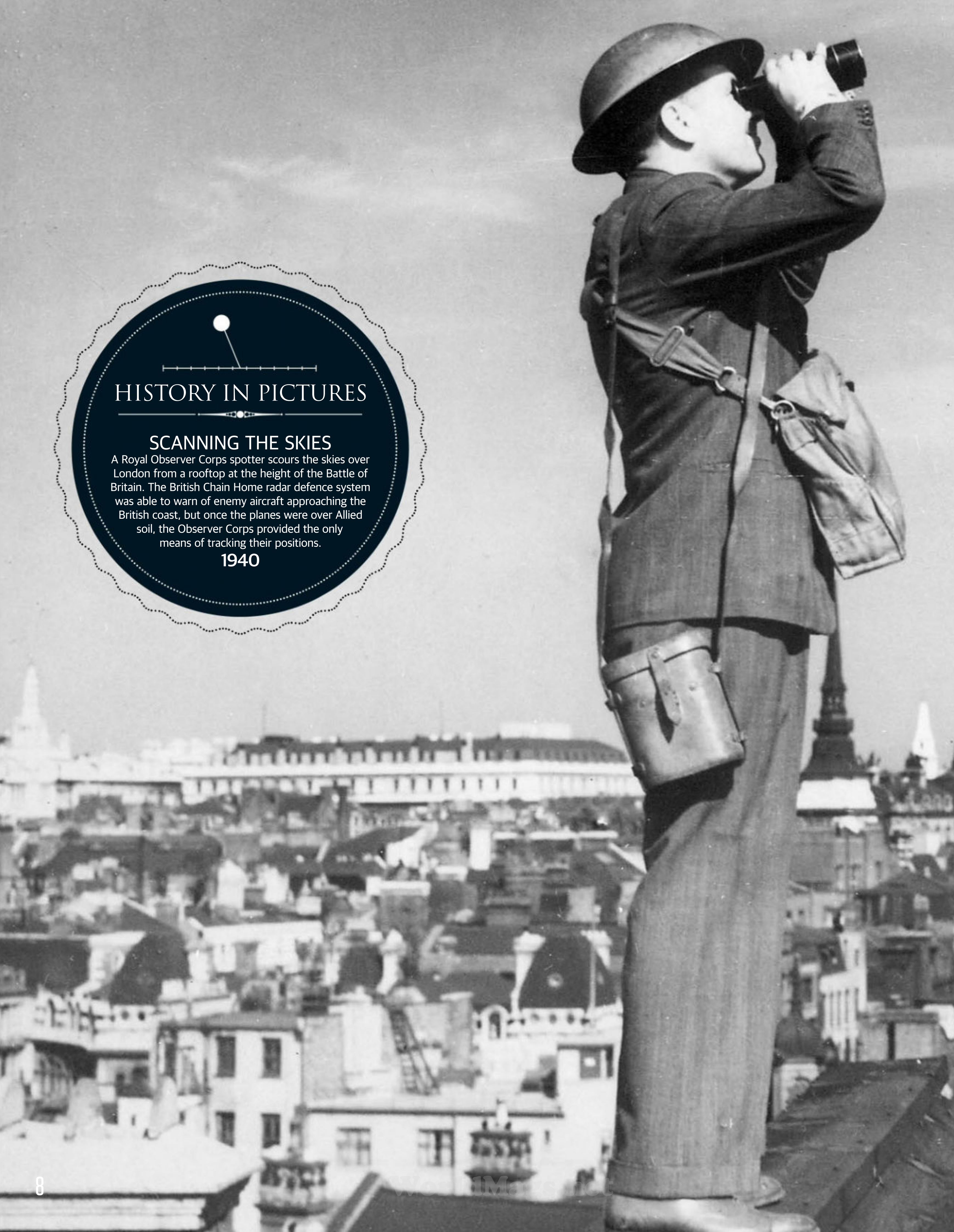
STEPS TO A BETTER WORLD

Ruby Bridges, the first African-American child to attend an all-white elementary school in the American South, is escorted out of the building by US marshals dispatched by President Eisenhower for her safety. After her enrolment, many parents withdrew their children from the school, and all but one teacher refused to teach Ruby.

14 November 1960

DEPU
U.S.
MARS

© Jared Enos



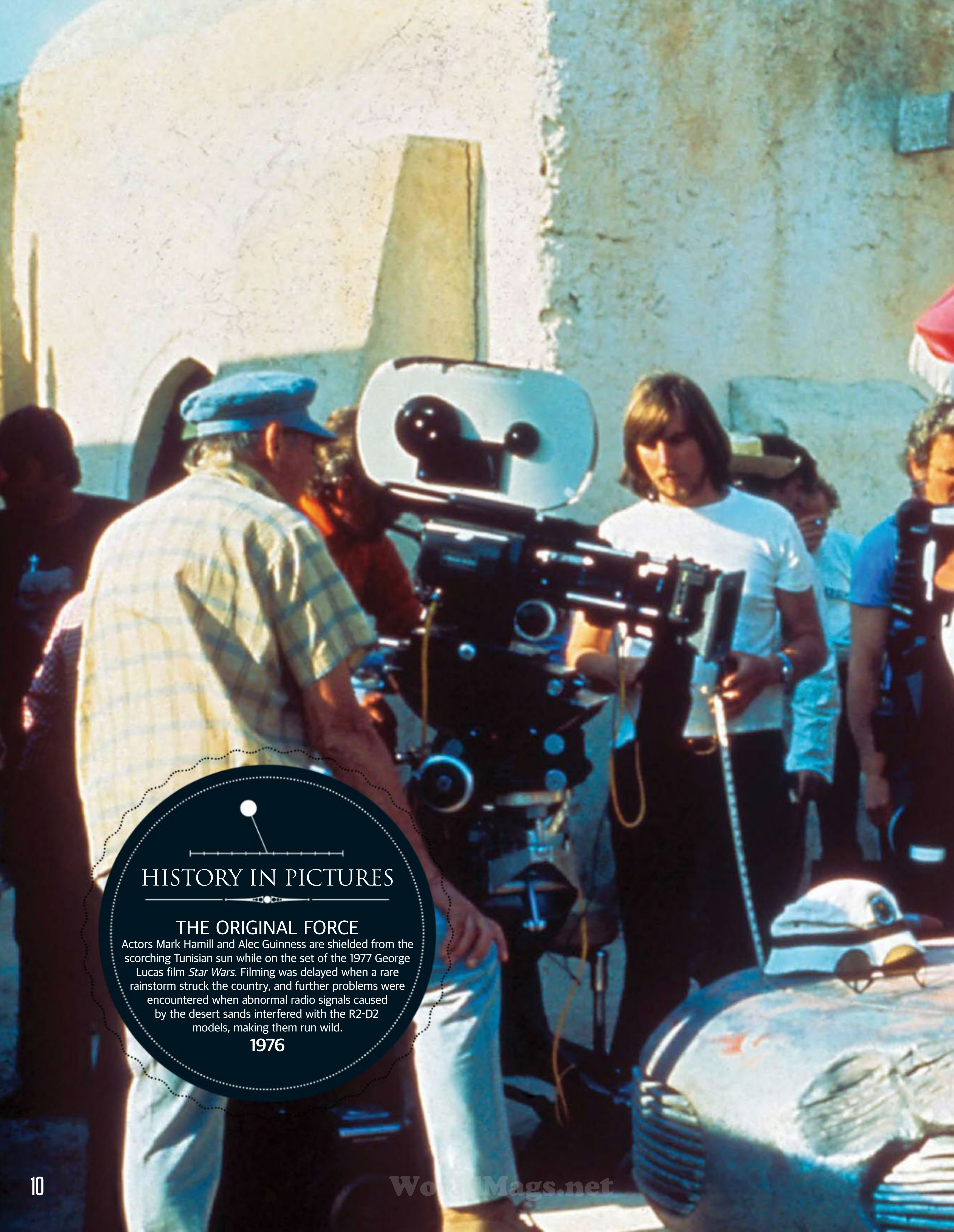
HISTORY IN PICTURES

SCANNING THE SKIES

A Royal Observer Corps spotter scours the skies over London from a rooftop at the height of the Battle of Britain. The British Chain Home radar defence system was able to warn of enemy aircraft approaching the British coast, but once the planes were over Allied soil, the Observer Corps provided the only means of tracking their positions.

1940

WorldMags



HISTORY IN PICTURES

THE ORIGINAL FORCE

Actors Mark Hamill and Alec Guinness are shielded from the scorching Tunisian sun while on the set of the 1977 George Lucas film *Star Wars*. Filming was delayed when a rare rainstorm struck the country, and further problems were encountered when abnormal radio signals caused by the desert sands interfered with the R2-D2 models, making them run wild.

1976

© Alamy

HISTORY IN PICTURES

A WINNER AT WIMBLEDON

More than 30 years before Andy Murray won the Wimbledon crown for Britain, English tennis player Virginia Wade took the title of Women's Singles champion. She won two sets to one in the final match against Dutch player Betty Stöve, in front of an audience that included the queen herself. The crowd celebrated her victory with chants of "for she's a jolly good fellow."

1 July 1977

© Alamy

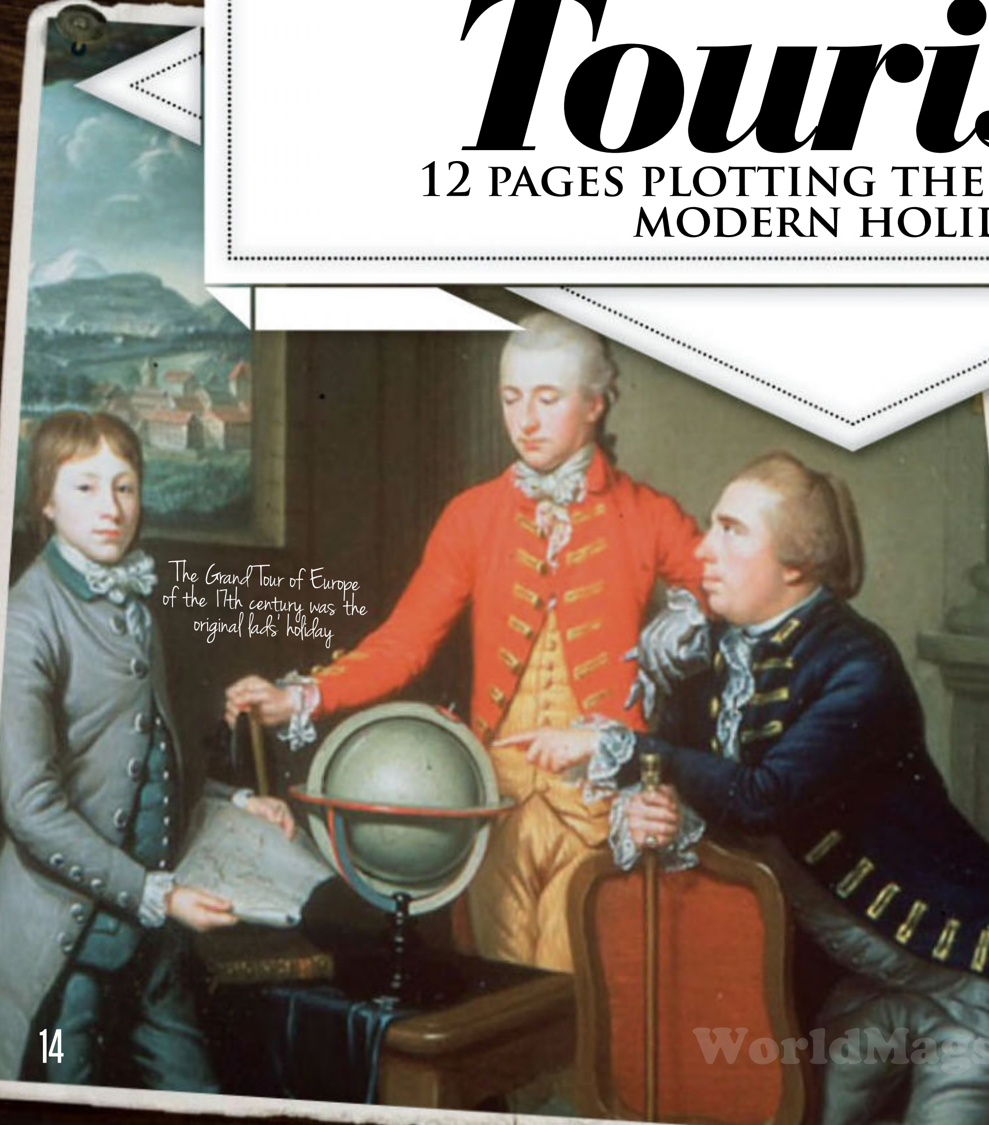
BUTLINS HOLIDAY CAMP
BUTLINS HOLIDAY 114 CAMP
BUTLINS HOLIDAY 120 CAMP

The first Butlins holiday camp opened its doors in 1936

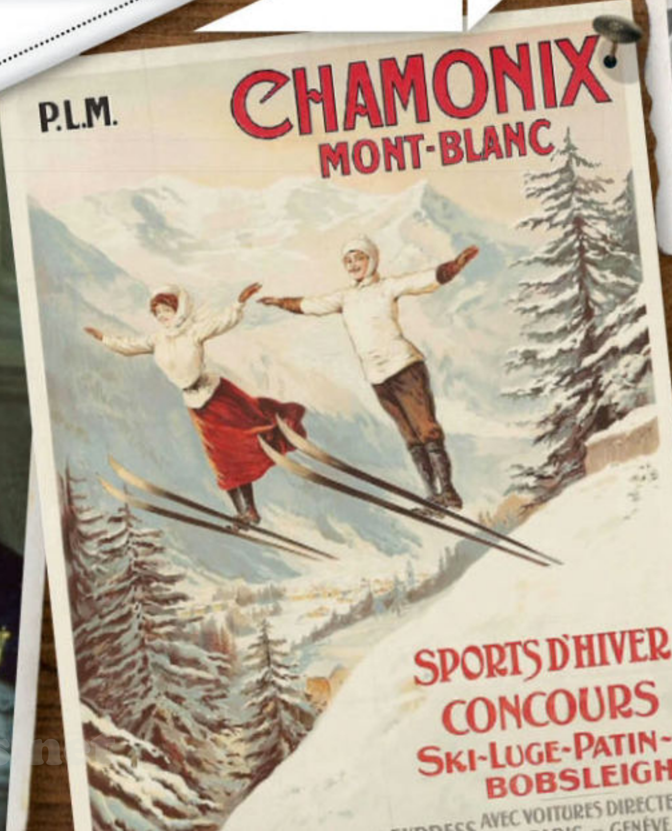
U.S. ARMY POSTAL SERVICE
1951
JUN 29
9 5 4
A.P.O.

Tourism

12 PAGES PLOTTING THE RISE OF THE MODERN HOLIDAY



The Grand Tour of Europe of the 17th century was the original lads' holiday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CHAMONIX
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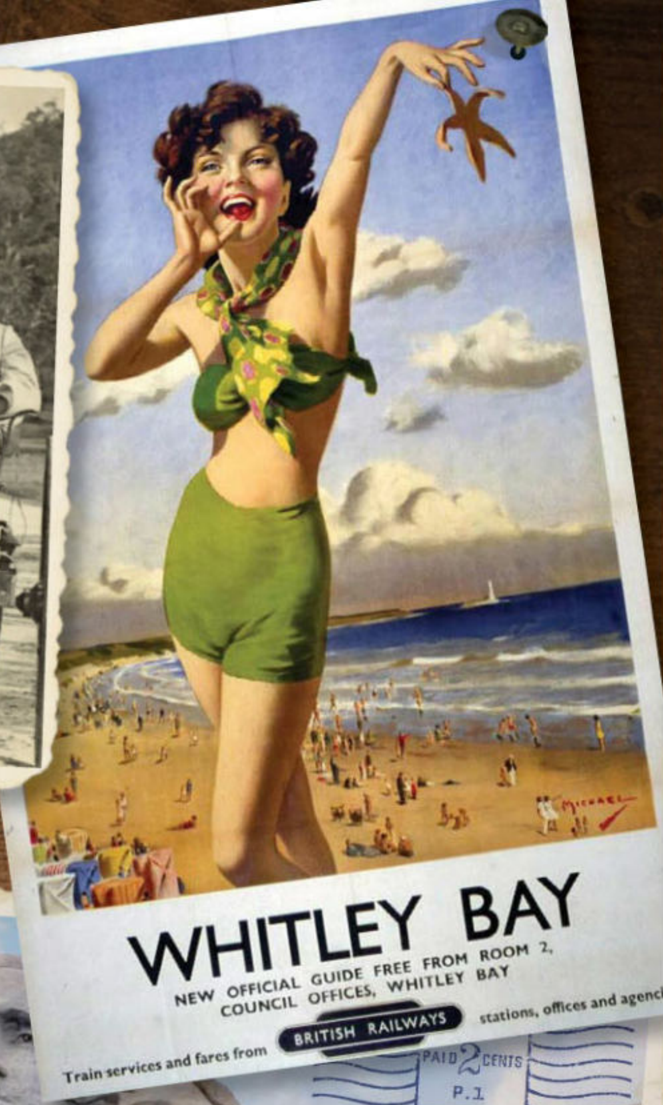
SPORTS D'HIVER
CONCOURS
SKI-LUGE-PATIN-
BOBSLEIGH
AVEC VOITURES DIRECTES
GENÈVE

Edwardian tourists in Sri Lanka hitch a ride in rickshaws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Michael

The invention of the steam train made working-class holidays a tangible reality

Australian soldiers visit the Pyramids and the Sphinx during leave in 1918

Prinzessin Victoria Luise was the first ship purpose-built as a cruise ship

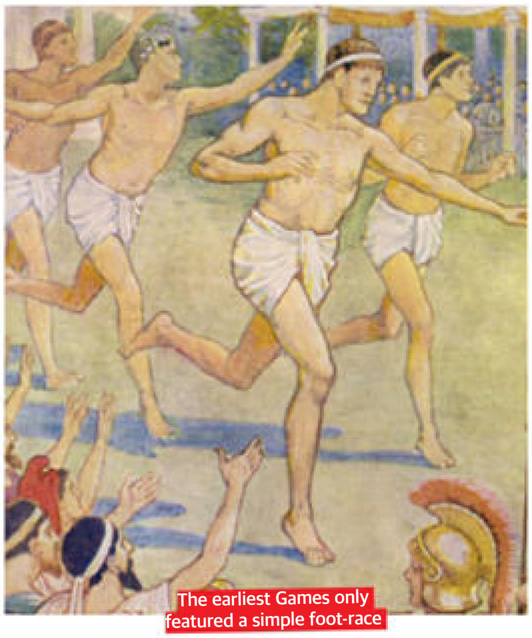
© Alamy, Corbis

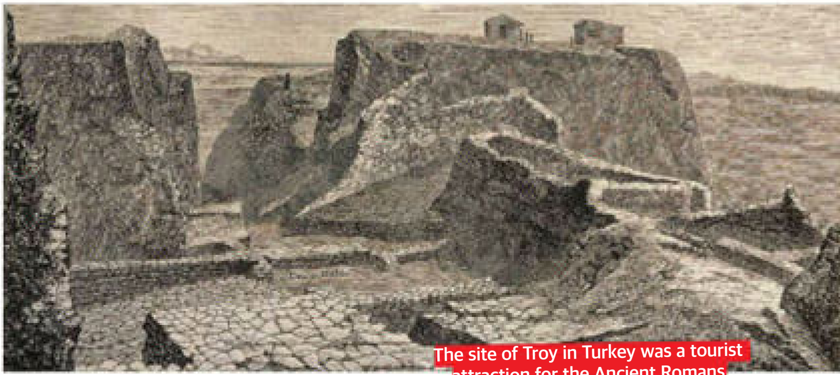
Tourism & holidays across history

LET THE GAMES BEGIN

ANCIENT GREECE 776 BCE

Sports tourism kicked off in Ancient Greece, where people from all over the world would travel to watch the Olympic Games. They were held every four years in Olympia as part of a religious festival to honour the god Zeus. Spectators would have to bear scorching heat and a limited water supply, and only important people or athletes were allowed to stay in hotel rooms.


The earliest Games only featured a simple foot-race


The site of Troy in Turkey was a tourist attraction for the Ancient Romans

Roman package holidays

ROME 27 BCE-476

Ancient Romans were some of the first people in history to enjoy safe, convenient travel across the world. The Mediterranean was purged of pirates and Roman coinage was acceptable everywhere, so international tourism became a popular pastime of the wealthy. Aristocrats would visit Greece to meet the philosophers, Egypt to see the pyramids and the ruins of Troy – all in the spirit of education and culture.

Tourism timeline

Ancient travel
The Sumerians (Babylonia) invent money, developing trade, commerce and travel.
4000 BCE

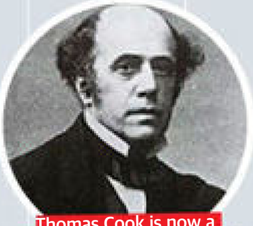
The start of spa breaks
Ancient Roman baths grow in popularity and size, as each emperor tries to outdo his predecessor.
2nd century

The Great Bath in the UK is still a popular attraction, receiving about 1 million visitors a year

Lord Byron goes on tour
The famous English poet goes on the Grand Tour – a customary trip of Europe for young noblemen in search of art and culture.
1809-11

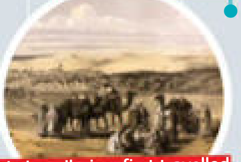
Going wild on safari
English military engineer William Cornwallis Harris leads an expedition to observe wildlife, establishing the safari-style holiday. **1836**

Thomas Cook's first commercial venture
Cook organises his first commercial trip, publishing a handbook of the journey to Liverpool – a forerunner to the holiday brochure.
1845


Thomas Cook is now a household name, providing holidays around the world

4000 BCE 100 CE 1600 1800 1850

Peace and tourism
Egypt's first female pharaoh, Queen Hatshepsut, travels to the lands of Punt – a place rich in myrrh, gold and spices – for peace and tourism.
1480 BCE


Christian pilgrims first travelled to sites connected with the life and death of Jesus

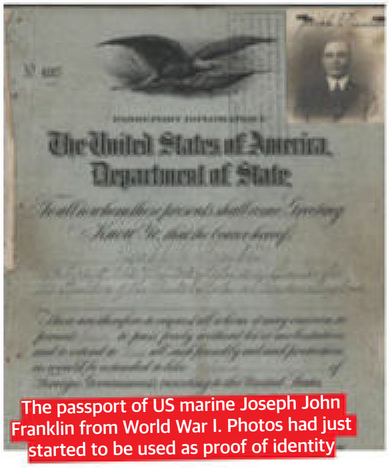
Journey to the Holy Land
Christians make pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Jerusalem. Travel for religious reasons is one of the earliest forms of tourism.
4th century

Maypoles are banned
Parliament bans maypoles, as May Day celebrations are seen as immoral affairs filled with drinking, dancing and debauchery.
1644

The battlefield becomes a tourist attraction
Soon after Napoleon's defeat at the Battle of Waterloo, tourists invaded the battlefield in search of souvenirs from the fallen soldiers. **1815**

Tourists took anything they could find on the battlefield, including soldiers' teeth

Wish you were here!
The earliest souvenir picture postcard is posted from Vienna.
1871

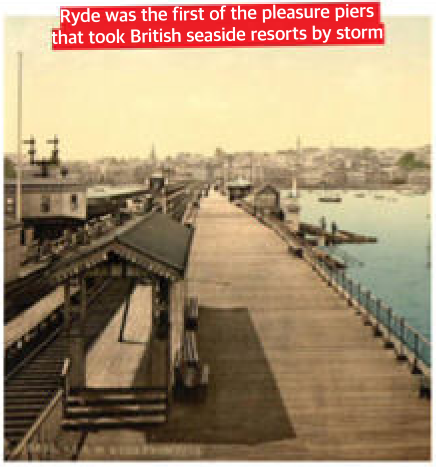

The United States of America
Department of State

The passport of US marine Joseph John Franklin from World War I. Photos had just started to be used as proof of identity

Passport to safety

ENGLAND 1414

Passports first appeared in Medieval times during the reign of King Henry V. When travelling to another country, people had to carry 'safe conduct' documents. These could be handed out to anyone, regardless of whether they were English or not. By 1540, it was the duty of the Privy Council to grant these travel papers – now called passports – but since 1794 they have been issued by the secretary of state. There's a record of every passport since this date.


Ryde was the first of the pleasure piers that took British seaside resorts by storm

Promenade on the pier

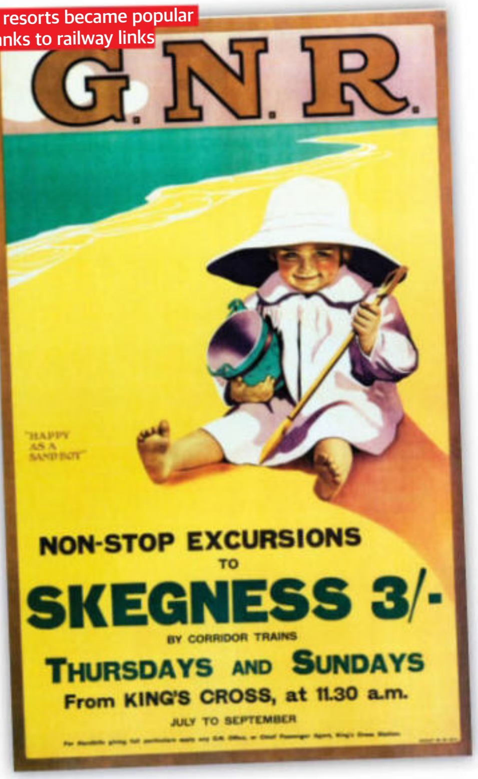
ENGLAND 1814

The easiest way to travel to the coast was by sea, but passengers often then had to wade through miles of squelchy wet sand to reach the town. In a bid to lure wealthy visitors to the seaside resort, the town of Ryde on the Isle of Wight built a wooden structure that still stands to this day. It was the first so-called pleasure pier and many more followed, including Brighton's Old Chain Pier, which was used as a landing stage for passenger ships from Dieppe, France.

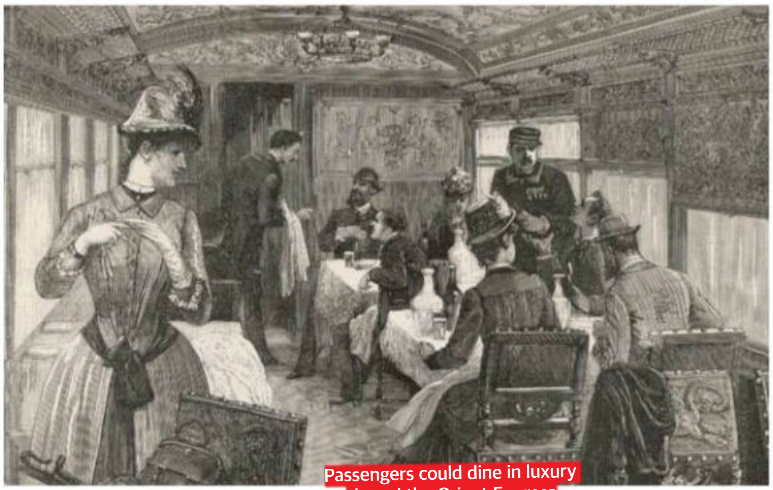
THE TRAIN LEAVES THE STATION

ENGLAND 1830

The age of railway was gathering steam as the Liverpool to Manchester line opened in the UK. Far cheaper and faster than travelling by coach, by 1900 Britain boasted 22,000 miles of track. Remote fishing villages became popular destinations for day trips and everyone could afford to go thanks to three different classes of travel. Not everybody was on board, however, as the Duke of Wellington complained that railways "would only encourage the lower classes to move about."



Seaside resorts became popular thanks to railway links



Passengers could dine in luxury aboard the Orient Express

Travelling in style

FRANCE 4 OCTOBER 1883

On board the Orient Express, James Bond fought a rival spy and Hercule Poirot solved his most famous crime. The long-distance train departed from Paris and travelled to Giurgiu in Romania, via Munich and Vienna, and only the rich could afford a ticket. Adorned with wooden panelling, silk sheets and leather armchairs, the Express was the epitome of European elegance and intrigue, proving that there was indeed a market for premium-priced tourism services.

The Bahamas opens its doors
The Hotel and Steam Ship Service Act provides government support for tourism in Nassau, promoting it as a fashionable winter season resort.
1898

Experience New Zealand
Long before Hobbits put New Zealand on the map, it becomes the first country to dedicate a government department to tourism.
1901

Just one of the many motels in America, designed for motorists

Welcome to the motel
The first motel opens in Memphis, United States, to meet the needs of a growing number of tourists travelling by car.
1952

The Spanish miracle
This economic boom, lovingly called the Spanish miracle, sees investment in infrastructure and development, making it a hugely popular tourist destination.
1959-74

Buckingham Palace is the UK's top tourist attraction

Theme parks transform Florida
Walt Disney World Resort opens its gates and adds $14 billion to Orlando's economy in its first year.
1971

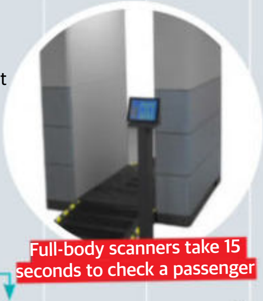
Welcome to Buckingham Palace
The State Rooms of the palace open to members of the public while the queen is not in residence.
1993

Disaster strikes
When four commercial airliners were used as weapons of destruction, tourism to the United States declined. US Congress issues grants to keep airlines flying.
11 September 2001

A biometric British passport can be used at ePassport gates to avoid queues

Biometric passports come into play
The ePassport is introduced, containing data about the passenger's biometrics, using facial, fingerprint and iris recognition.
2006

Off with your shoes
Full-body scanners start replacing metal detectors at airports around the world.
2007



Full-body scanners take 15 seconds to check a passenger

Tourism takes a hit
A volatile global economy, exchange rate fluctuations and an outbreak of the H1N1 influenza virus causes international tourism to suffer.
2008-09

Chinese tourists splash out
Chinese travellers are officially crowned the biggest spenders in international tourism, overtaking Germany and the United States.
2012

1900 1950 1970 1990 2000 2010 2015

White paint became trendy after the Prinzessin, which was designed to keep the ship cool in the Mediterranean

Cruising into the future

GERMANY 1901

The world's first purpose-built cruise ship was christened The Prinzessin Victoria Luise, named after Kaiser Wilhelm II's daughter. In true regal style, it offered 120 cabins – all first class – fine dining, a gym and a daily newspaper printed on board. Some modifications were even recommended by the emperor himself, but he was disappointed that it was longer than the royal yacht. On 5 January 1901, it departed Hamburg on its maiden voyage to New York, marking the start of the modern cruise holiday.

The Lufthansa crew outside the airliner that would fly them non-stop from Berlin to New York

The first transatlantic flight takes off

GERMANY, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 1938

Thousands of people gathered for the landing of the world's first non-stop transatlantic flight. The plane landed in the afternoon of 11 August 1938 in Floyd Bennett Field in Brooklyn, New York, after making a record-breaking flight from Berlin, Germany. It took just under 25 hours to cross the Atlantic and touched down to cheers from amazed onlookers. The aircraft was a Focke-Wulf Fw 200 Condor and was developed in Germany and used throughout World War II as a long-range maritime bomber.

@Alamy; Look and Learn

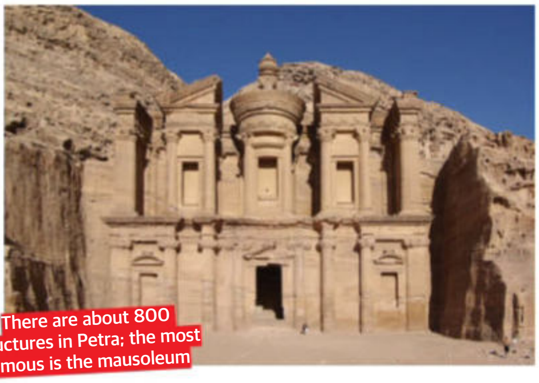
Hall of Fame
TOURIST HOTSPOTS

Lost civilisations, former places of pilgrimage and monuments wiped from the face of the Earth – take a tour of history's most intriguing attractions

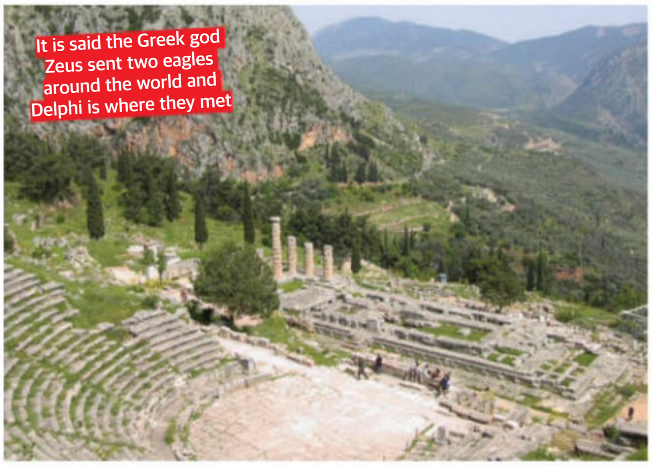
Petra

JORDAN

The lost city of Petra became known all over the world after a starring role in *Indiana Jones And The Last Crusade*. The rock-carved city was established in 312 BCE and its people, the Nabataeans, thrived from their advanced water system and the trade from passing caravans. Petra has been visited by tourists since the 13th century, when Sultan Baibars of Egypt would come to see the ruins, and now souvenir shops line the Wadi Musa area.



There are about 800 structures in Petra; the most famous is the mausoleum



It is said the Greek god Zeus sent two eagles around the world and Delphi is where they met

Delphi

ANCIENT GREECE

As far as the Ancient Greeks were concerned, Delphi was the centre of the world. It was also the site where Apollo was said to have killed the terrible python that guarded the sacred ground for hundreds of years. With this victory, Apollo declared Delphi his sanctuary and was worshipped as the god of light and harmony. The area grew in importance and during the 8th century BCE, Delphi was known for the Pythia – a priestess who foretold the future. People from across the Mediterranean paid great sums for her prophecies. Delphi lost its spiritual hold with the invasion of the Romans in 191 BCE and Apollo's worship replaced with an imported religion: Christianity.

PYRAMIDS OF GIZA

EGYPT

The oldest and only surviving wonder of the Ancient World, the Pyramids of Giza are some of the most remarkable feats of engineering in history. The Great Pyramid was built for the Fourth Dynasty Pharaoh Khufu and was completed around 2560 BCE. They have been a lure for foreign visitors for centuries, from the Greek geographer Herodotus in 5th century BCE to Napoleon Bonaparte in 1798. Legend has it that Napoleon emerged from the King's Chamber having had a paranormal experience that he would take to his grave. It's apocryphal, but a testament to the enduring mystery of the Great Pyramid.

The sloping sides symbolised the rays of the sun, designed to help the king's soul ascend to heaven

> Deep inside the Giza pyramids lies a maze of tunnels containing gold and other artefacts. Egyptians thought it would be useful in the afterlife.

HIMEJI CASTLE

JAPAN

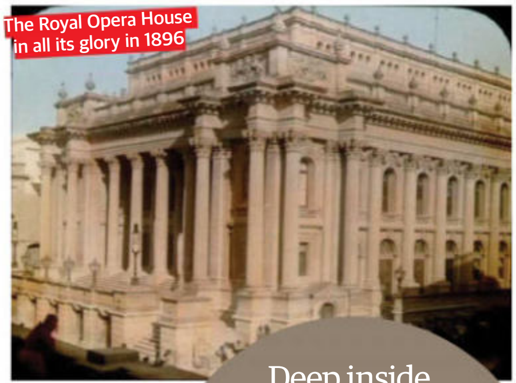
There is a platform in the castle that dancers could perform on to entertain warriors

Amazingly, Himeji Castle hasn't suffered any serious damage from wars or natural disasters since its completion in 1331. Built from wood, not stone, the structure is fire proof because of its white plaster walls. This also gives the castle its nickname 'White Heron', along with the fact that the main keep and smaller towers resemble the bird. In 1993, the castle was registered as Japan's first UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site because of its beautiful design.

Royal Opera House

MALTA

Religious and noble, the Knights of St John were also fans of the theatre. Since their arrival in Malta in 1530, they had transformed the island into a fortress and a centre of culture. Theatre was becoming a favourite pastime and the Grand Master commissioned the Manoel Theatre in 1732 to provide wholesome entertainment for the knights. The Royal Opera House followed in 1866, designed by the architect responsible for London's Covent Garden Theatre. It was a testament to their love of the arts that it was rebuilt after a fire, but Luftwaffe bombs reduced it to rubble.



The Royal Opera House in all its glory in 1896

The Catacombs

FRANCE

Under the heart of Paris lies the Empire of the Dead - a 200-mile labyrinth lined with the bones of approximately six million Parisians. The remains were transferred after cemeteries became so overcrowded that corpses burst from the ground and the smell of rotting flesh disturbed the living. Graveyards were emptied in 1786 and relocated to the former quarries whose stone had been used to build monuments like Notre Dame. The Catacombs have fascinated Parisians ever since. King Charles X held parties in them, Napoleon III took his son on a tour, and the French Resistance used them to hide from Nazis in World War II.

Certain passageways in the Catacombs are still open to tourists today

There's a group of urban explorers called 'cataphiles' that try to illegally gain access to the Catacombs. Patrolling police fine any intruders they come across.

There are a whopping 83 stones that make up Stonehenge

STONEHENGE

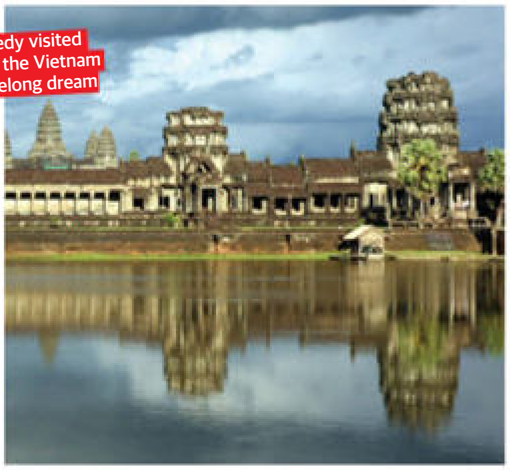
ENGLAND

Stonehenge has been a place of pilgrimage for centuries, making it one of the most famous prehistoric monuments in the world. It began about 5,000 years ago as an earthwork enclosure where prehistoric people buried their cremated dead, while the stone circle was erected in the late Neolithic period, around 2,500 BCE. Tourists visiting today are actually part of a long tradition that dates back to Roman times.

ANGKOR WAT

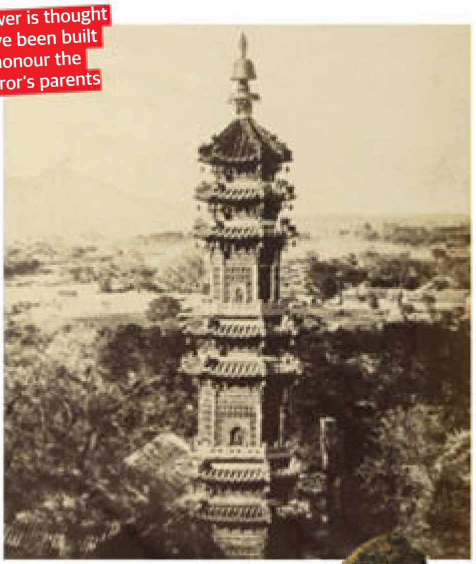
CAMBODIA

Its name means 'temple city', which is apt considering it's one of the largest religious monuments ever built. Spanning an area of 500 acres, Angkor Wat was originally constructed between 1113 and 1150 as a Hindu temple dedicated to the god Vishnu. Come the 14th century, however, it was converted to a Buddhist temple when the king and his subjects changed their faith. Today, over half the tourists that visit Cambodia come for the temples.


Jacqueline Kennedy visited Angkor Wat during the Vietnam War to fulfil her lifelong dream

Porcelain Tower of Nanjing **CHINA**

One of the Seven Wonders of the Medieval Ages, the Porcelain Tower rose 79 metres (260 feet) high. It was built during the Ming Dynasty in the 15th century as a place of worship. At night, the tower was lit with more than 100 porcelain lamps and during the day it would glitter in the sun. However, in the 19th century, lightning struck it, and then in 1850 the Taiping Revolution finished it off completely. Rebels destroyed the tower so it couldn't be used as a lookout post and it's remained a pile of rubble ever since - until now. The Chinese government is currently reconstructing this Medieval wonder.

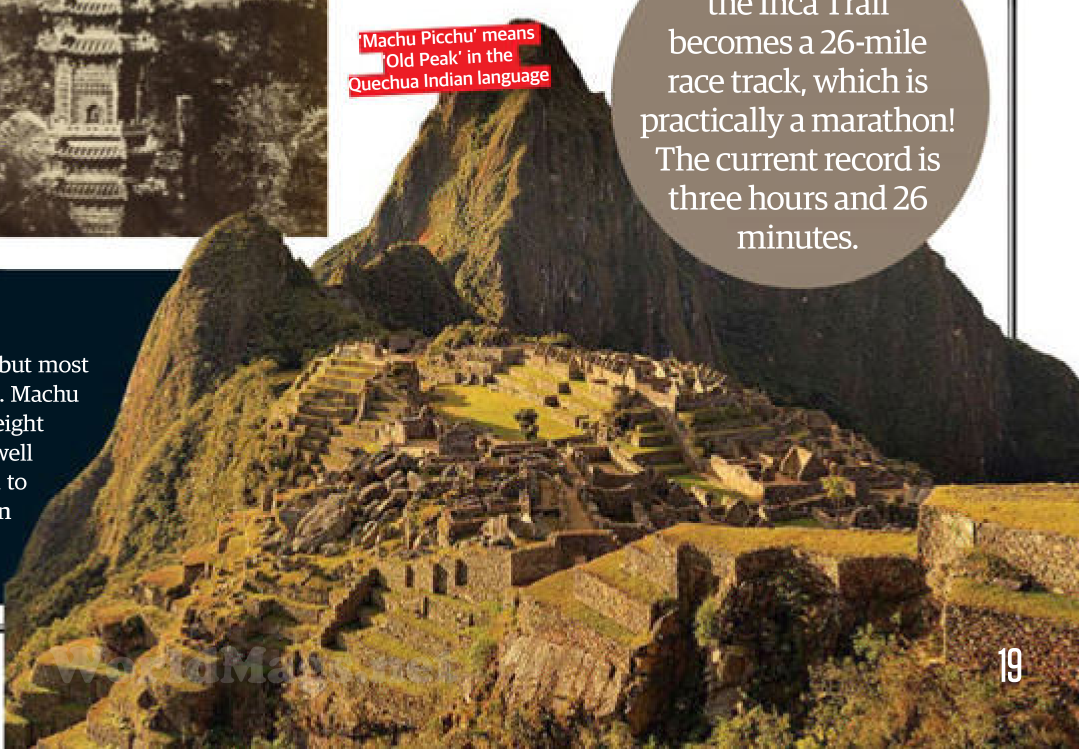

The tower is thought to have been built to honour the emperor's parents

"Tourists visiting Stonehenge today are part of a long tradition dating back to Roman times"

Every year the Inca Trail becomes a 26-mile race track, which is practically a marathon! The current record is three hours and 26 minutes.

MACHU PICCHU **PERU**

The Incas were some of the best masons in the world but most of their cities were destroyed by the Spanish conquest. Machu Picchu was concealed, though, at the lung-crushing height of 2,430 metres (7,970 feet) above sea level. It was so well hidden that it wasn't re-discovered until 1911. Believed to be the sacred site for Inca leaders, it features more than 3,000 stone steps and 150 buildings, from temples to baths and houses.


'Machu Picchu' means 'Old Peak' in the Quechua Indian language

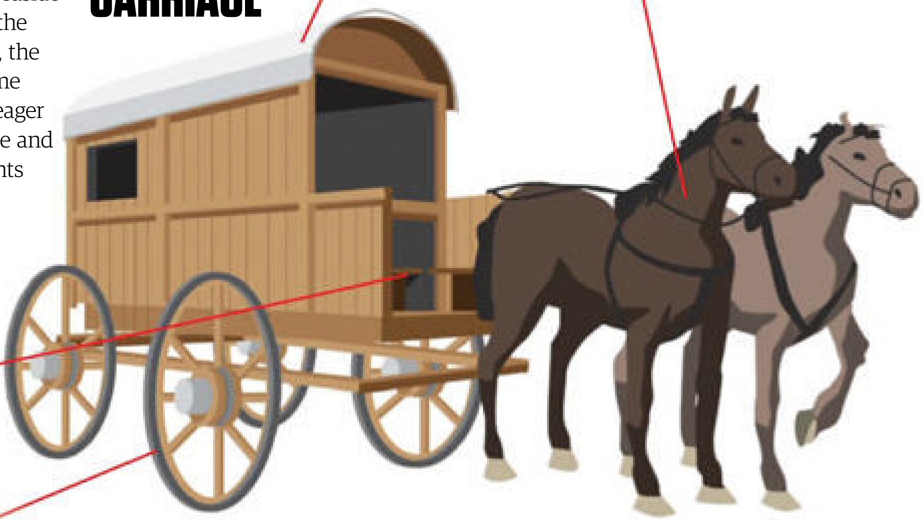
How to BE A TOURIST IN ANCIENT ROME

IT WAS EASY TO GET SWALLOWED UP BY THE CITY AT THE CENTRE OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

ANCIENT ROME, 27 BCE-330 CE

Although humans had been embarking on sightseeing journeys before the Roman civilisation, the innovations of the empire allowed more and more people to travel for pleasure. The Roman road network, with almost 300,000 kilometres of roads, was key in encouraging tourists to travel, and the host of festivals and attractions brought many rural travellers to the capital city. While wealthy native citizens would often leave Rome for seaside resorts in the south, or even the beaches of Egypt and Greece, the capital quickly became a prime tourist destination for those eager to glimpse the splendour, gore and excess of the games and events hosted in Rome.

A ROMAN CARRIAGE



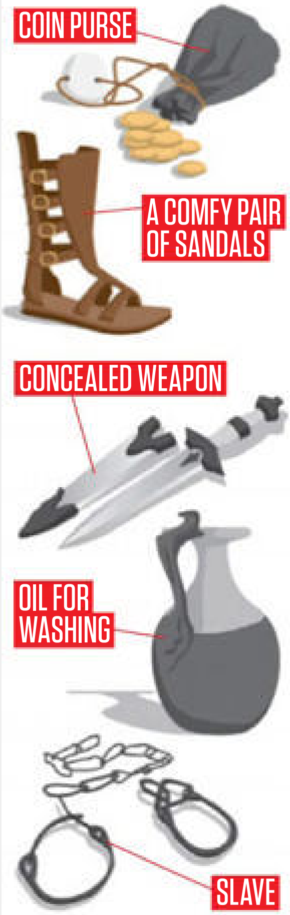
Journey
The distance travelled in a day varied greatly depending on the carriage and route, ranging from 15 miles on the cheapest carriage to 25 miles for military carriages.

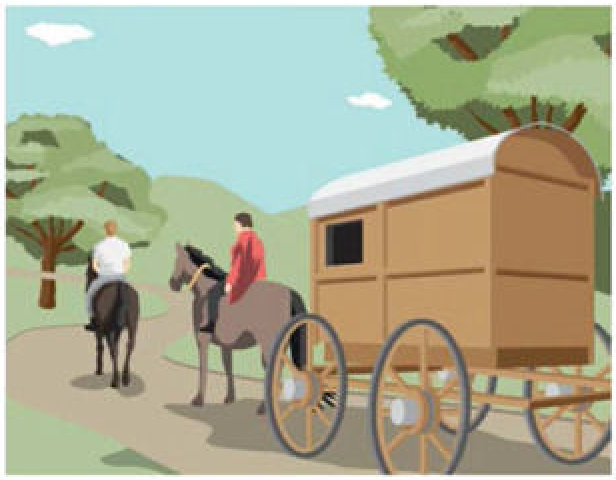
Horses
The number of horses pulling a carriage depended on the type of carriage it was. The smaller, more exclusive carriages were drawn by two mules or horses.

Seating
While wealthy citizens could afford an exclusive carpentum carriage, the raeda was similar to modern-day buses, with many benches and room for luggage.

Wheels
The wheels of carriages were iron-shod, and on the basalt pavement they would make a horrendous noise that was known to keep residents awake all night.

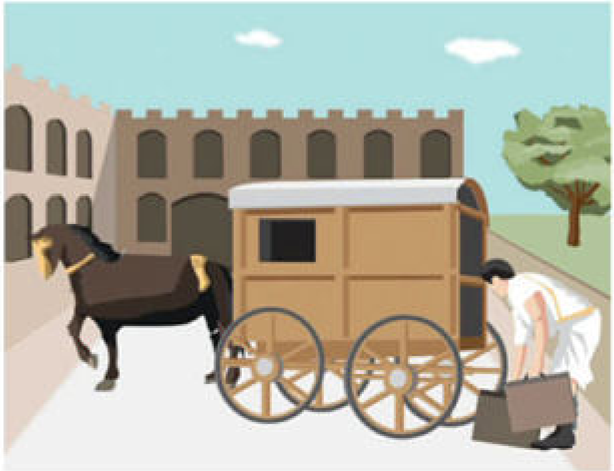
WHAT YOU'LL NEED





01 Travel there

Although the Roman Empire benefits from straight, well-built roads, safe travel is not a guarantee for those who wish to visit the capital. Before you leave be sure to pray to Mercury, the god of travellers, for protection on your journey. It's best to travel in the day as bandits frequent the roads at night, resulting in travellers being assaulted, abducted and even killed.



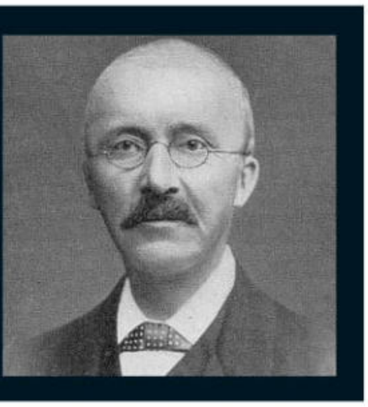
02 Find lodgings

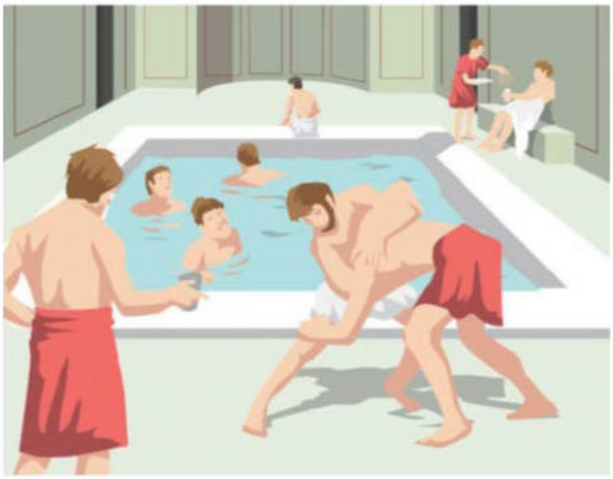
While wealthy citizens own private villas to spend their holidays in, the options for tourists travelling into the city are not quite as luxurious. There are many inns and cauponae, which are somewhat like taverns, but the conditions here are poor and deemed a necessary evil of travelling, known for bedbug infestations and rampant prostitution.

How not to… protect historical sites

Some historical landmarks, such as the pyramids of Giza and Stonehenge, have been preserved for thousands of years, attracting many tourists to glimpse them every year. However, even more have been destroyed and lost forever. Thanks to war, pillage and more recently, construction, many sites of historical importance have been destroyed or damaged beyond repair.

However, what may be one of the biggest archaeological losses in history was actually the work of the archaeologist who set out to find it. Heinrich Schliemann was determined to uncover the ancient city of Troy. In 1871, he began excavations where he believed Troy was located, and believing that the historical city must lay at the lowest level of the stacked cities he discovered, quickly made his way through the upper levels. Schliemann used various rough methods and even dynamite to flatten city walls. In fact, the level Schliemann was determined to uncover was built several thousand years before the Troy of Helen. It is believed that Schliemann and his team ploughed through and destroyed the ancient city, which is now lost forever.

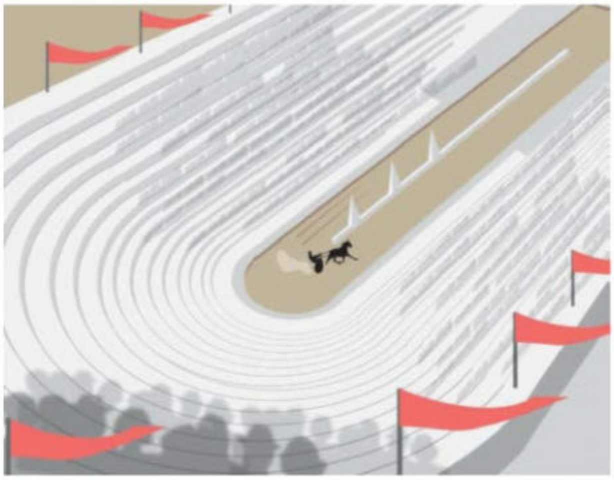




03

Relax in the baths

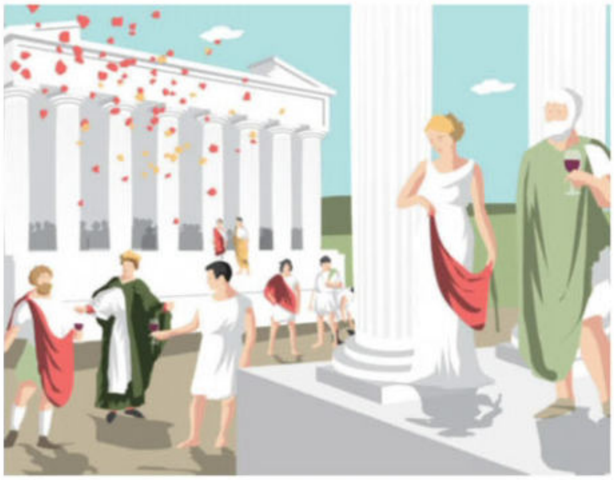
The baths are a must-see attraction of Ancient Rome, and perfect for the poorer traveller, as everyone can afford to go. Some of the most famous baths in Rome are the Diocletian, Caracalla and Trajan. While there you can play sport, exercise, chat with the locals to find out the gossip or simply take it easy and relax in the thermal springs.



04

Watch a chariot race

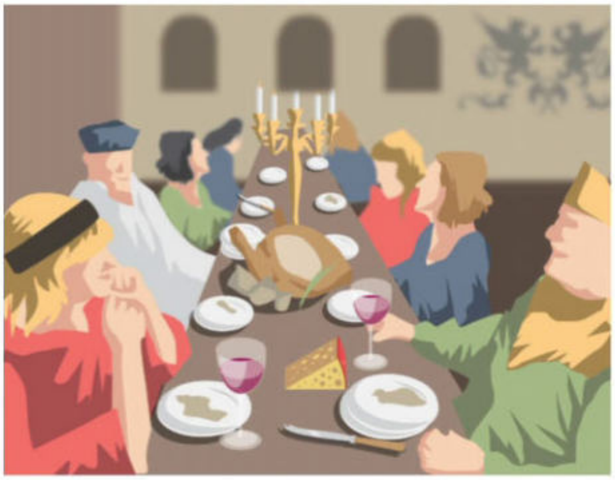
Take a trip to the Circus Maximus, one of Rome's largest venues, to witness adrenaline-pumping chariot races. If you're not into that, there's lots more to see - horse and foot races, gladiator duels and wild beast hunts. In the reign of Probus, the site was transformed into an artificial forest for hunts and filled with animals such as ostriches, zebras, rhinos and polar bears.



05

Take part in a festival

The best time to visit Ancient Rome is during one of the many festivals. Most festivals in Rome are religious and involve everyone in the city. There is a huge choice, but a literal once-in-a-lifetime event not to miss is the secular games, held once every 100 years. The games last for three days with theatrical performances, chariot racing and, of course, sacrifices.



06

Enjoy some food

The standard of eating will very much depend on your status and how much money you have. Poorer travellers can go to an inn for an adequate meal, but those with higher status may be invited to a private banquet. Here you can dine on many different courses, but some of the more unusual include baked dormouse, stuffed sow's uterus, rabbit foetus and peacock tongue.

4 MUST-SEE SIGHTS

THE COLOSSEUM

70-80 CE

The largest amphitheatre in the world, the Colosseum could hold up to 80,000 spectators and was used for an array of public events and spectacles.

THE PANTHEON

126

Originally built during the reign of Augustus, this temple of the gods was later reconstructed by emperor Hadrian.

ROMAN FORUM

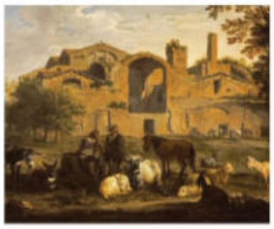
497 BCE

As well as housing important government buildings, the forum served as a large marketplace and sat at the centre of Roman life.

BATHS OF DIOCLETIAN

306

Although the city had many public baths, the Diocletian baths were the largest and most luxurious. It is also believed they may have housed libraries.



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Top 5 facts THOMAS COOK

THE TOURISM PIONEER WHO BROUGHT ALL-INCLUSIVE TRAVEL TO THE MASSES

THOMAS COOK

Nationality: English
Born: 22 November 1808
Died: 18 July 1892

Brief Bio

One of the best known names in worldwide travel, Thomas Cook was a cabinet maker from Derbyshire who founded the Thomas Cook & Son travel agency. Starting with short excursions from Leicester to Loughborough, Cook's determination and vision gave both the social elite and working class people the chance to see the wonders of the world.

01 HIS BACKGROUND WAS FAR FROM PRIVILEGED

Cook was born to Elizabeth and John Cook. His father worked as a labourer but died when his son was just three years old. Although his mother remarried, their financial situation was dire, and Thomas was forced to leave school aged ten to become a gardener's boy and later an apprentice cabinet-maker.

02 He was driven by his religion

A devout Baptist, Cook arranged his first 'all-inclusive' trip when he organised 540 temperance campaigners to travel from Leicester Campbell Street Station to a rally in Loughborough. The travellers were charged one shilling for their tickets and food. This was such a success that he continued to do it for temperance societies and Sunday school children.

03 He wasn't instantly popular

Despite earning the nickname 'Napoleon of Excursions', many people were critical of Cook's low-cost trips. As well as people complaining about the bad taste of taking tourists to the battlefields of the American Civil War, he was accused of swamping Europe with "everything that is lowbred, vulgar and ridiculous."

04 His relationship with his son was strained

Although Cook's son, John, later became his successor, he had a difficult relationship with his father and Cook was reluctant to give him much control of the business. Cook didn't share his son's beliefs that religion and philanthropy must be kept separate from business. After a serious disagreement in 1878, Cook retired and allowed John to run the business alone.

05 He gave women more independence

A large number of Cook's customers were single or unescorted women. As this was during the Victorian era, it was very unusual for women to do this, as they would usually be required to travel with a chaperone for protection. Being part of an escorted tour allowed these women, who were usually not permitted to travel alone, to explore far-off lands at their leisure.

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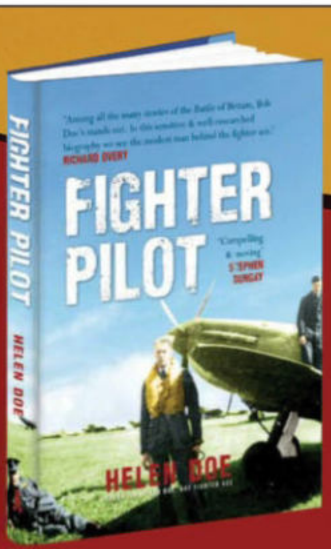

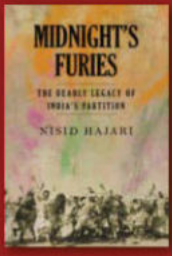

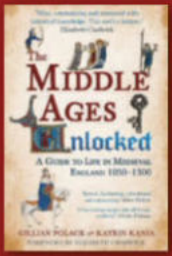

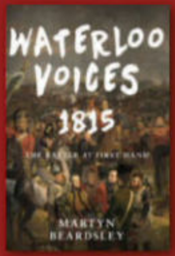

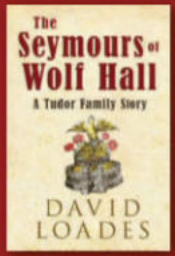

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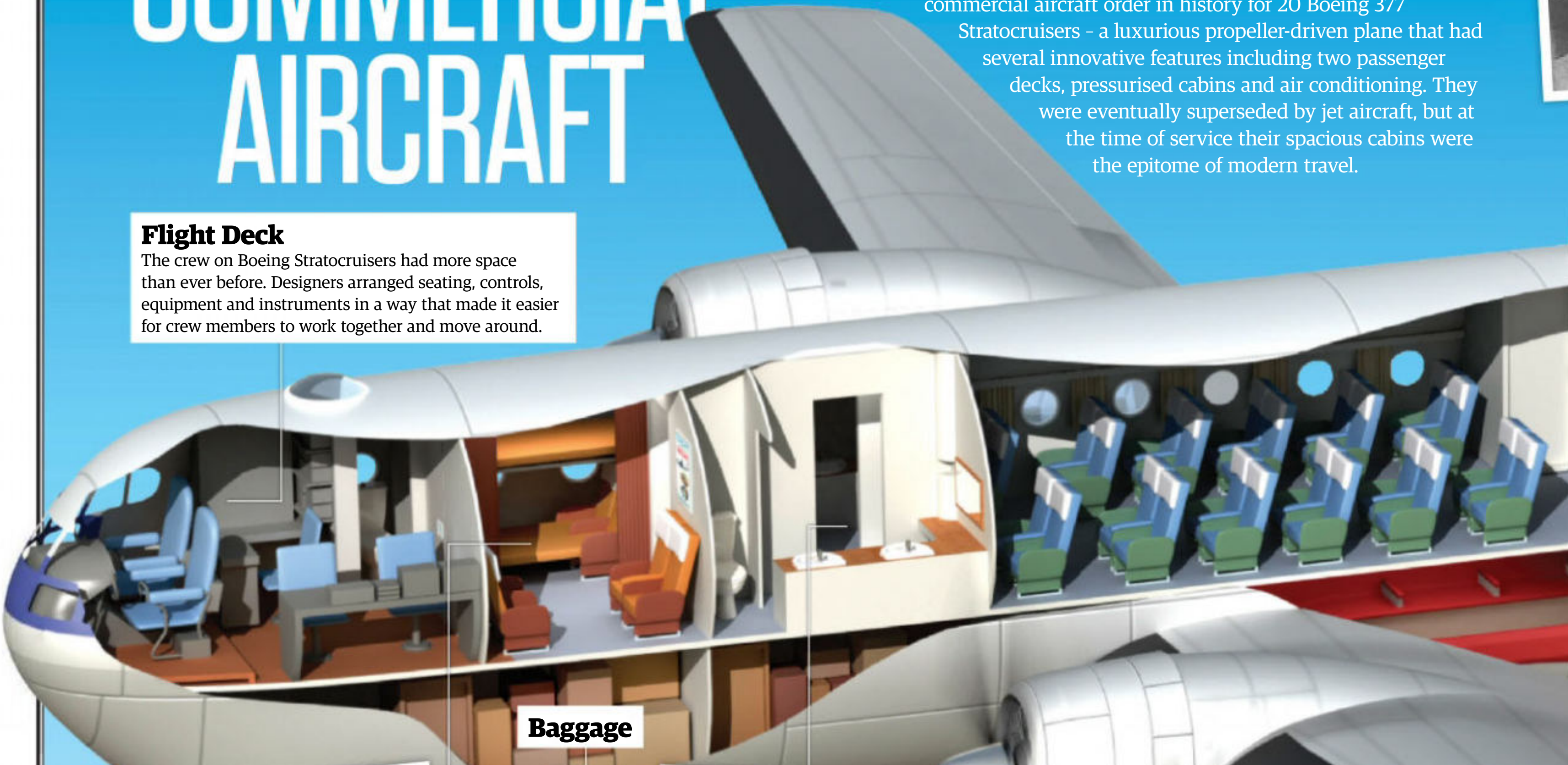
EARLY COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT

LUXURY TRAVEL FOR THE FORTUNATE FEW, 1949-63, USA

The first scheduled commercial airline flight took place on 1 January 1914, when American pilot Tony Jannus carried a passenger across Tampa Bay in his Benoist XIV biplane. Over the space of four months, 1,200 passengers took the 23-minute flight across the bay, each paying $5 for the privilege. In 1925, the Ford Motor Company bought the Stout Aircraft Company – whose planes were originally used for transporting mail – and began construction of the Ford Trimotor, which was the first successful American airliner at a 12-passenger capacity. At around the same time, Juan Trippe established Pan American Airways, which was the first US airline to go international. Their first planes, Boeing Clippers, were seaplanes that flew between the USA and Europe. In 1945, they placed the largest commercial aircraft order in history for 20 Boeing 377 Stratocruisers – a luxurious propeller-driven plane that had several innovative features including two passenger decks, pressurised cabins and air conditioning. They were eventually superseded by jet aircraft, but at the time of service their spacious cabins were the epitome of modern travel.



Flight Deck
The crew on Boeing Stratocruisers had more space than ever before. Designers arranged seating, controls, equipment and instruments in a way that made it easier for crew members to work together and move around.

Baggage

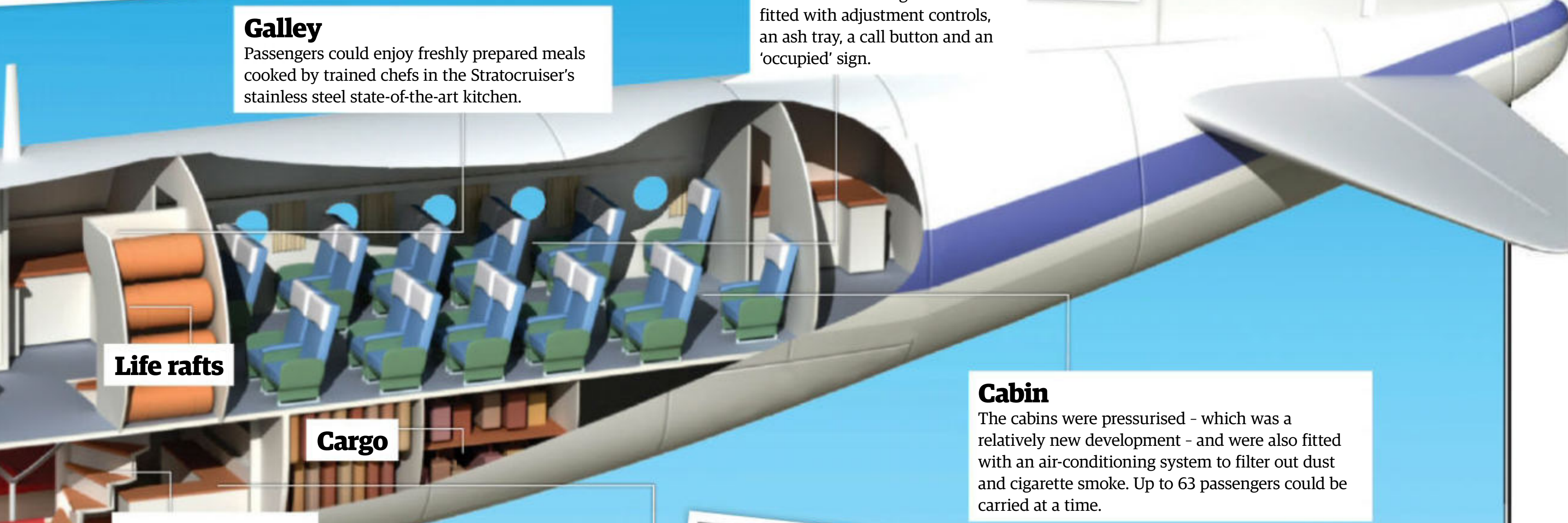
Aft luxury compartment
Designed for business travel or families, the compartment carried up to five passengers and featured private sleeping berths.

Dressing room
Unlike modern single-occupancy WCs, the ladies' powder room had a sofa, two dressing tables, full-length mirrors and a separate dental basin.

> “At the time of service their spacious cabins were the epitome of modern travel”

Seating
Cushioned reclining chairs were fitted with adjustment controls, an ash tray, a call button and an ‘occupied’ sign.

Galley
Passengers could enjoy freshly prepared meals cooked by trained chefs in the Stratocruiser’s stainless steel state-of-the-art kitchen.



Cabin
The cabins were pressurised - which was a relatively new development - and were also fitted with an air-conditioning system to filter out dust and cigarette smoke. Up to 63 passengers could be carried at a time.

Engine
Four 3,500hp radial engines with four-bladed propellers drove the plane forward, allowing it to reach speeds of 375mph (603km/h).

Lounge
The lower deck had a lounge seating up to 14 people, with rich upholstery, a bar, and tables that could be used for playing cards.

© Adrian Mann, Alamy, Corbis, Getty Images

Day in the life

A YOUNG NOBLEMAN ON THE GRAND TOUR

THE ORIGINAL LADS' HOLIDAY, RESERVED FOR THE ELITE OF ENGLISH SOCIETY, EUROPE, 18TH CENTURY

Before the emergence of rail and steam as a major form of transport, only the social elite could afford to travel for pleasure, and the custom of young gentlemen travelling across Europe to refine their sensibilities flourished in the 18th century. The main focus of the journey, which could last several months, was education and culture. This trip, through cultural centres such as France and Italy, became a right of passage for any young man who wished to fill a prime position in government or society.

MEET WITH THE GUIDE

Young, curious Englishmen were not simply unleashed upon the countries they travelled to. As these young travellers were often inexperienced, they usually had a knowledgeable tutor as a chaperone. These guides, known as Cicerones, or more casually 'bear-leaders', would speak the language of the country they were travelling in. Depending on their wealth and status, the noble traveller could also be accompanied by servants.

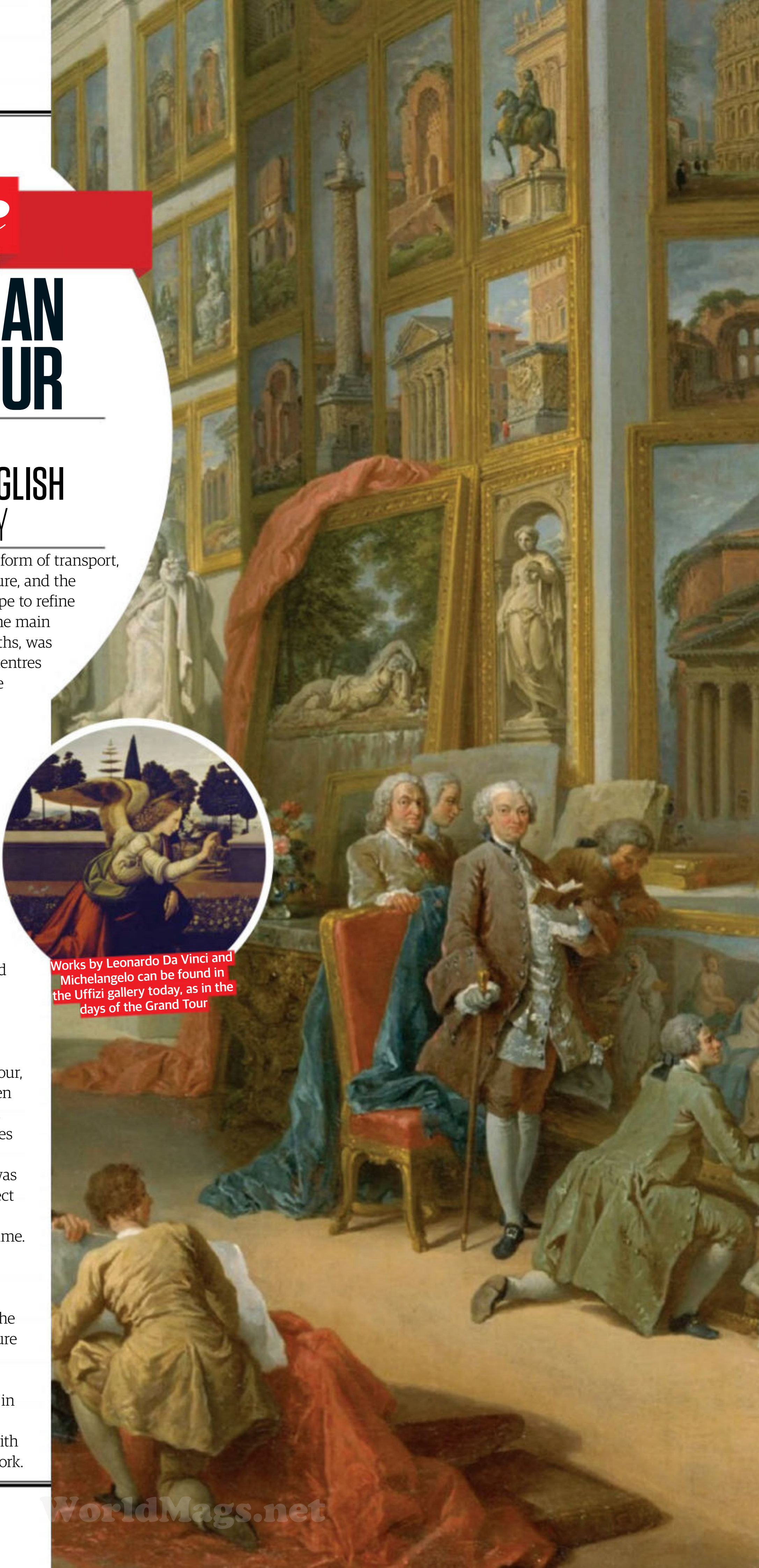
Works by Leonardo Da Vinci and Michelangelo can be found in the Uffizi gallery today, as in the days of the Grand Tour

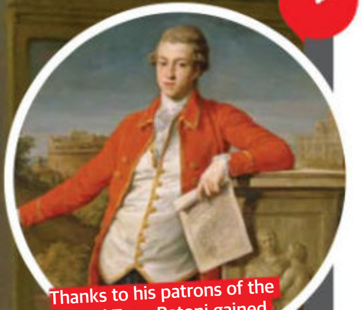
BUY A NEW WARDROBE

Paris was a vital stopping point on the Grand Tour, and it was essential for aspiring young noblemen to involve themselves in the French aristocratic life. This began by shedding their English clothes and buying an entirely new wardrobe. Another key part of embracing the Parisian way of life was to practise the manners of French society, perfect their fencing and riding skills and, of course, to learn how to dance the popular dances of the time.

VIEW ART

One of the huge draws of the Grand Tour was the opportunity to view exquisite paintings, sculpture and architecture. In Britain, art collections were displayed only in private houses, but the Grand Tourist had the opportunity to visit the Louvre in Paris and the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. Italy, in particular, was a wonderland for the art lover with its churches full of astonishingly beautiful artwork.





Thanks to his patrons of the Grand Tour, Batoni gained international fame and went on to paint royalty

COMMISSION A PAINTING

In lieu of digital cameras and smartphones, many gentlemen on the Grand Tour would pen a sketch of the surrounding sights themselves. However, for those who could not draw or wished for something more special, artists were available for commission to create the perfect visual memento of their travels through Europe. The most famous Roman portraitist at the time, Pompeo Batoni, would create pieces featuring the young men alongside famous Italian landmarks.

BUY SOUVENIRS

It was essential for any man on the Grand Tour to return with plenty of souvenirs that he could proudly display back home. Popular items were books, sculptures, fans and cameos. Art in particular was prized and a source of pride for all travellers. The locals soon picked up on the British spending habits and tourists became known as the biggest, and usually stupidest, spenders, which prompted an emergence of art forgeries.

MINGLE WITH THE ELITE

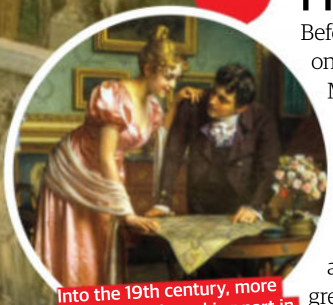
A popular pastime for gentlemen on the Grand Tour was to mingle with French and Italian royalty, as well as British envoys. As the men who embarked on the Grand Tour were almost always from the upper classes, they were keen to make connections with the elite of society. Grand Tourers would also often stay in the home of British envoys when local apartments were not acceptable – a fact not well liked by the envoys.

LET LOOSE

It wasn't all culture and sophistication – bear-leaders often had trouble trying to keep their young boys out of trouble on the tour. The less educational pastimes of the men included gambling and lots of drinking. The undisciplined, eccentric and occasionally violent behaviour of young Englishmen became known worldwide and their wild antics even impressed the Russians. Another major draw of the Grand Tour was the intimate encounters offered by the courtesans of Venice, where many travellers picked up an undesirable memento – syphilis.

PREPARE FOR THE NEXT LEG

Before the prevalence of railways, travel for those on the Grand Tour could be difficult and perilous. Most travelled by carriage, and those who did faced a difficult time while crossing over the Mount Cenis pass to reach Italy, as there was no road. The carriage would be dismantled and the traveller would have to be carried on a chair attached to poles, and then a sled. The alternative was to take a boat, but this had even greater risks of pirate attack and seasickness.

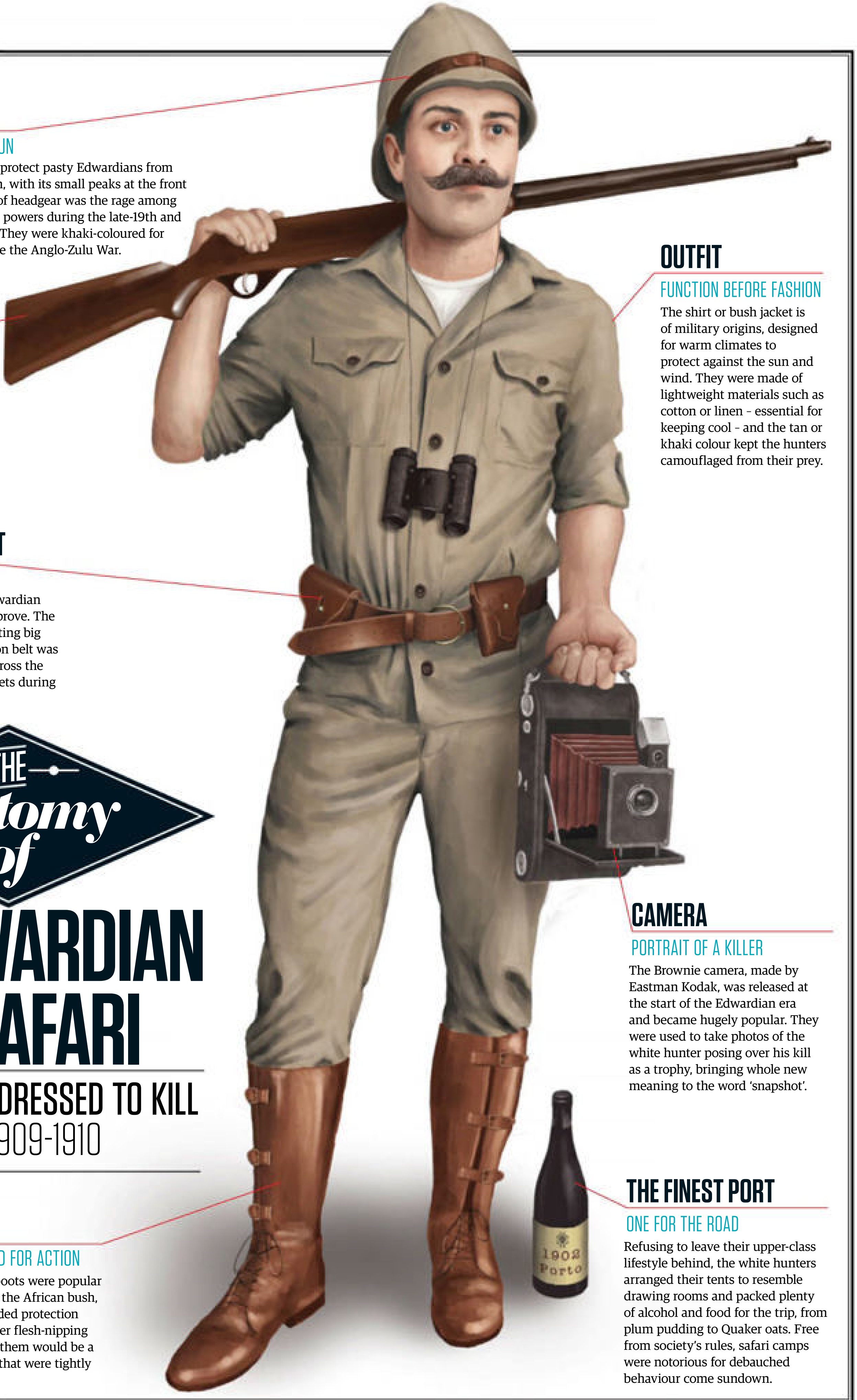


Into the 19th century, more women were also taking part in the Grand Tour

THE *Anatomy of* AN EDWARDIAN ON SAFARI

THE GENTLEMAN DRESSED TO KILL

AFRICA, 1909-1910



PITH HELMET

PRACTISING SAFE SUN

A pith helmet would protect pasty Edwardians from the harsh African sun, with its small peaks at the front and back. This form of headgear was the rage among all European colonial powers during the late-19th and early-20th centuries. They were khaki-coloured for camouflage ever since the Anglo-Zulu War.

ELEPHANT GUN

THE WEAPON OF CHOICE

Wild animals could pose a threat to the 'white hunter', especially if they decided to charge. To stop elephants, rhinos and other creatures in their tracks, the elephant gun was developed. This large-calibre rifle was extremely powerful, but very heavy.

AMMUNITION BELT

ALWAYS PACKING HEAT

In a period of peace, the Edwardian on safari had something to prove. The gentleman became a gun-toting big game hunter. An ammunition belt was worn around the waist or across the body for access to more bullets during a long pursuit.

SHOES

SUITED AND BOOTED FOR ACTION

Tall leather lace-up boots were popular for trekking through the African bush, providing much-needed protection from insects and other flesh-nipping critters. Tucked into them would be a pair of tan jodhpurs that were tightly fitted at the ankle.

OUTFIT

FUNCTION BEFORE FASHION

The shirt or bush jacket is of military origins, designed for warm climates to protect against the sun and wind. They were made of lightweight materials such as cotton or linen - essential for keeping cool - and the tan or khaki colour kept the hunters camouflaged from their prey.

CAMERA

PORTRAIT OF A KILLER

The Brownie camera, made by Eastman Kodak, was released at the start of the Edwardian era and became hugely popular. They were used to take photos of the white hunter posing over his kill as a trophy, bringing whole new meaning to the word 'snapshot'.

THE FINEST PORT

ONE FOR THE ROAD

Refusing to leave their upper-class lifestyle behind, the white hunters arranged their tents to resemble drawing rooms and packed plenty of alcohol and food for the trip, from plum pudding to Quaker oats. Free from society's rules, safari camps were notorious for debauched behaviour come sundown.

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THE

HATED QUEEN

MARIE ANTOINETTE

How one woman's passion for fashion, stubbornness and extravagant spending drove her country to chaos and revolution

Written by Frances White

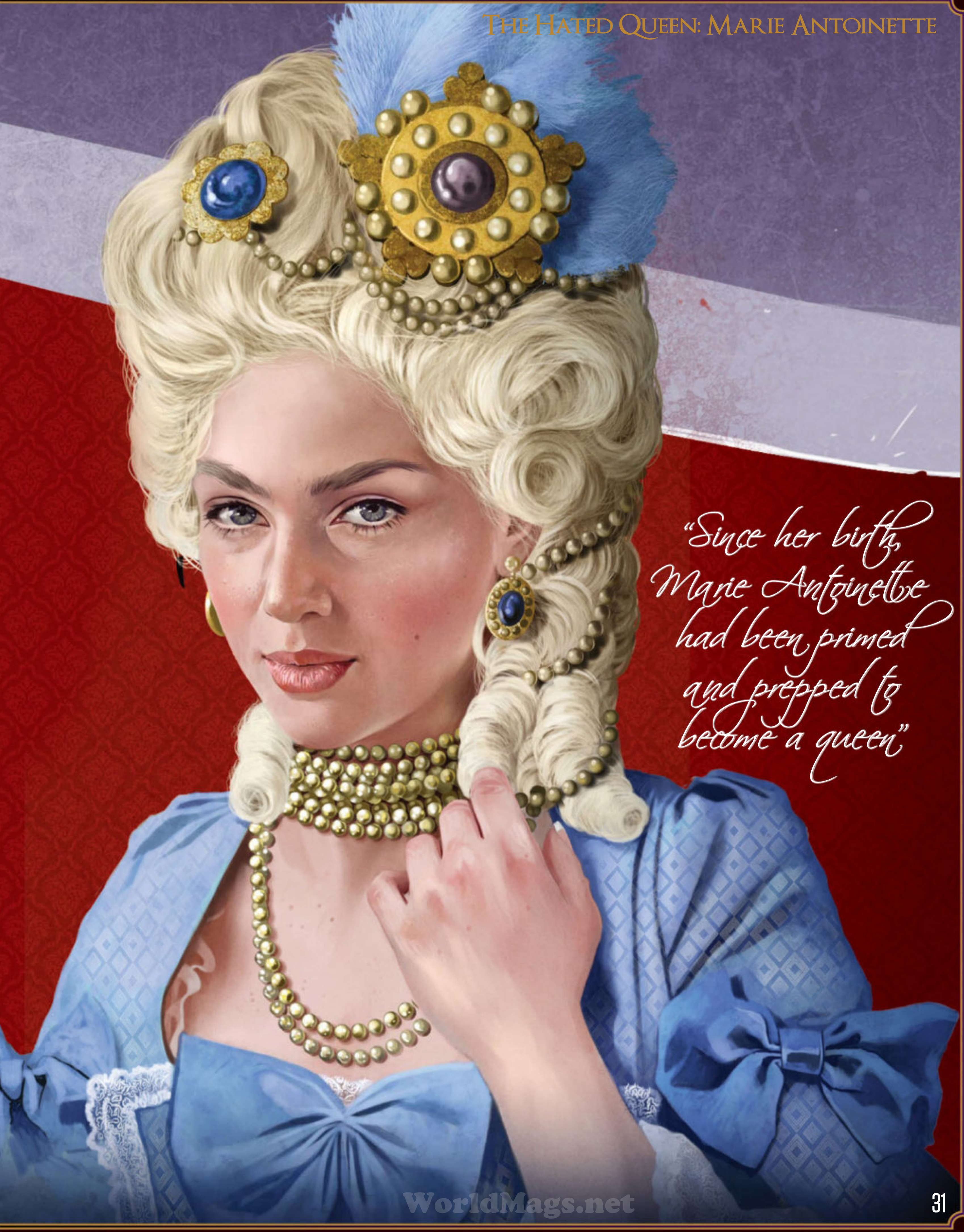
A single cart drawn by two huge white horses travels through the streets of Paris as a ravenous crowd fights to catch a glimpse of the woman within. Her hands are bound but her back is straight and her expression is hard and proud. Her famous blonde hair has turned a premature grey, and the figure that was once dainty and slender has grown large with rich palace meals. She sits frozen in place while the crowd spit and yell insults at her. Her name is Marie Antoinette, formerly the queen of France, and the people are screaming for her blood.

As the cart reaches Place de la Révolution, Marie catches a glimpse of her one-time home, the grand Tuileries Palace, and her face crumbles. Sudden hot tears stream from her eyes and her body trembles. But in a moment she has recovered. She forces the tears back, veils her emotion and steps from the cart with purpose. Draped in a white cotton gown and white cap, she has been stripped of all the finery she was once renowned for, but Marie knows, even without a crown, she is still a queen; that is all she ever was. With her head held high, she moves with majesty towards the guillotine. The time is 12.15pm when she rests her neck upon the block. The blade is released, and in a moment the illustrious and terrible life of the most hated woman in France is ended.

> LOUIS HAD NO QUALMS ABOUT DINING IN PUBLIC, BUT MARIE LOATHED IT, AND OFTEN WAITED UNTIL SHE WAS IN PRIVATE TO EAT

Since her birth, Marie Antoinette had been primed and prepped to become a queen. Born the 15th child of the formidable Holy Roman Empress Maria Theresa, the only woman to serve in the role, her mother was strict and distant with her youngest daughter, determined she should serve as a bridge between the two great warring dynasties of Habsburg and Bourbon. Maria was a clever woman, and she ensured that her beautiful young daughter became the talk of the French capital. The French king Louis XV was convinced, and arranged the marriage of the young archduchess to his grandson and heir, Louis XVI.

The two great leaders, concerned with cementing their individual power, had not taken into consideration the compatibility or the happiness of the children involved. The young archduchess was undoubtedly beautiful, with her slender figure and gleaming blonde hair, but she was also incredibly vivacious. Caring little for books and education, she was a thrill-seeker, and although she didn't know languages or mathematics, she knew people, and was an expert at getting them to do exactly what she wanted. The young dauphin, meanwhile, was a quiet and timid boy. Strictly religious, he read often and engaged in quiet pursuits. He loved deeply, but he feared even more so, and most



> "Since her birth, Marie Antoinette had been primed and prepped to become a queen"

THE ARISTOCRAT MENU

FOUR SOUPS

Rice soup, Scheiber, croutons with lettuce, croutons unis pour Madame

TWO MAIN ENTRÉES

Rump of beef with cabbage, loin of veal on the spit

SIXTEEN ENTRÉES

Spanish pâtés, grilled mutton cutlets, rabbits on the skewer, fowl wings à la Maréchale, turkey giblets in consomme, larded breasts of mutton with chicory, fried turkey à la ravigote, sweetbreads en papillot, calves' heads sauce pointue, chickens à la tartare, spitted suckling pig, Caux fowl with consomme, Rouen duckling with orange, fowl fillets en casserole with rice, cold chicken, chicken blanquette with cucumber

FOUR HORS D'OEUVRES

Fillets of rabbit, breast of veal on the spit, shin of veal in consomme, cold turkey

SIX DISHES OF ROASTS

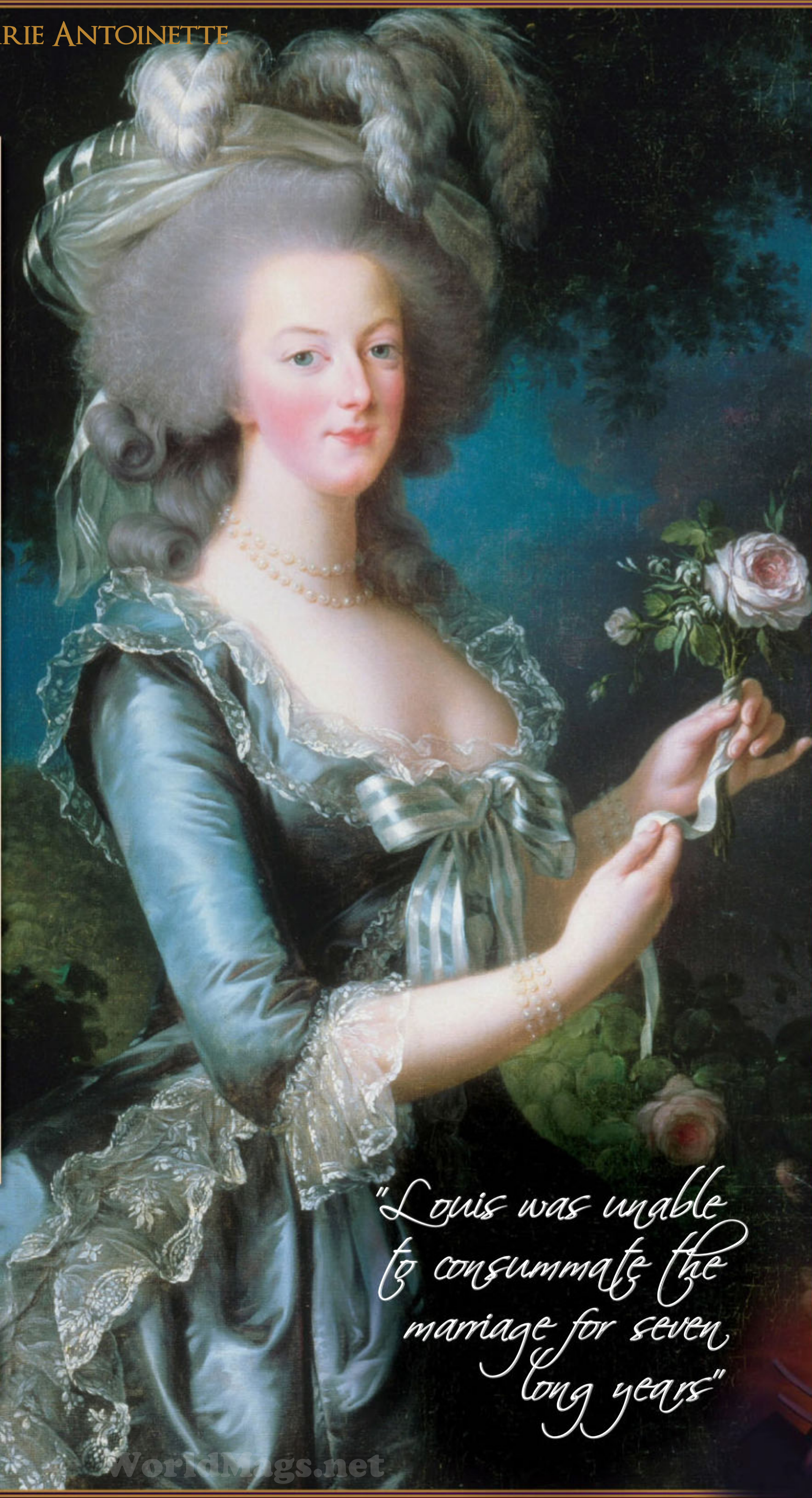
Chickens, capon fried with eggs and breadcrumbs, leveret, young turkey, partridges, rabbit

DESSERTS

Apple strudel, orange-flower, rosewater and lemon meringues, macarons, jellied fruits, candied violets

The Pauper Menu

Coarse stale brown bread & vegetable soup



"Louis was unable to consummate the marriage for seven long years" crucially, he was a man who could be easily convinced by loud, persuasive people - his new wife was one such person.

The moment Marie stepped through the doors of Versailles she was surrounded by courtiers far older and more experienced than her, who opposed everything she represented - an alliance between France and Austria. Marie was denied the common method any young queen would employ to solidify her position - producing an heir - as Louis was unable to consummate the marriage for seven long years. Her awkward and humiliated husband shrank smaller and smaller under the knowing smirks of the members of court, but shrinking was the last thing Marie had on her mind.

Marie dressed for success. She robed herself in a huge array of luxurious silk dresses, placed her dainty hands into scented gloves, stood strong in high heels and literally made herself taller with her towering pouf hairstyle. She broke court traditions, abandoning heavy make-up and replacing wide-hooped panniers with simple feminine dresses that complemented her full figure. Her costume was strategy for survival; it sent a loud and clear message - "I can do exactly what I please" - and this message filtered into her lifestyle. As her husband slept, she partied into the early hours, gossiping with friends and attending masked balls. She commissioned a painting of herself riding in the style of a man and she even dared to own a property independently of her husband. The young Austrian was making waves; if tradition wouldn't accept her, then she would smash it to pieces.

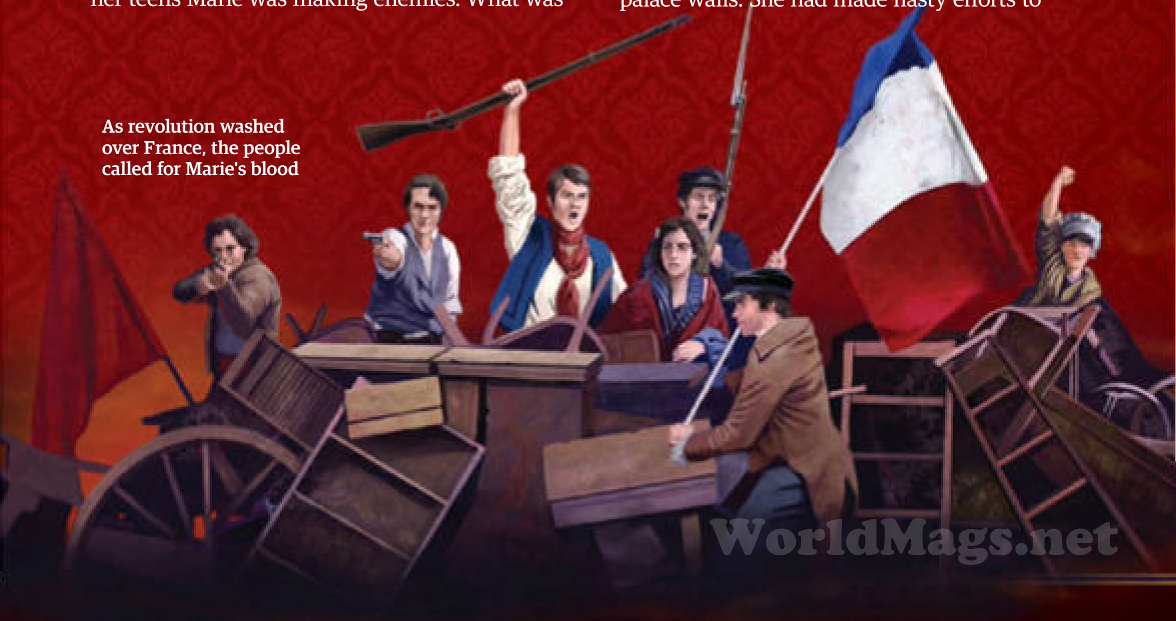
The older generation at court didn't like this one bit - a frivolous, air-headed girl they could handle, but an ambitious and stubborn foreign woman who didn't know her place? That was far more dangerous. Before she had even finished her teens Marie was making enemies. What was originally the gossip of court filtered outside the palace walls and filled the pages of the libelles, the slanderous pamphlets published across France. To the writers and readers of these, the lack of an heir obviously meant that the queen was courting other men, and her excessive wardrobe came across as grandiose at a time when her people were starving. The revolutionary propaganda that was already bubbling leapt upon this image of an idiotic, shameless queen and refused to let it go. Little did Marie know, while she focused on cementing her place as queen, the destruction of the royal authority had already begun, and she was to serve as the centrepiece.

After the royal couple were finally able to produce an heir, the queen transformed from a party girl to a stern, self-controlled woman. But this change came too late; the revolution gaining speed outside the palace walls had already decided exactly what sort of person she was. The country was in debt, huge debt, and it was the common people who were feeling the sting. Marie, deemed responsible thanks to her trivial expenditures, was dubbed 'Madame Déficit'. This was not without truth - Marie spent more than any other person in France, bestowing her favourites with gifts and reluctant to tax her aristocrat chums. The expenses of court were huge, and outside the people were starving.

But Marie was fighting her own battles. Her husband, after suffering from bouts of depression, had withdrawn his power in government and she was the only one able to cement the authority of monarchy in his place. Despite her own mother's advice to avoid meddling in politics, the queen emerged as a powerful political force, and without the support of her husband was forced to grapple for the power of the monarchy against an assembly growing less and less faithful.

On the surface she was iron, but underneath Marie was shaken by the uprising outside the palace walls. She had made hasty efforts to

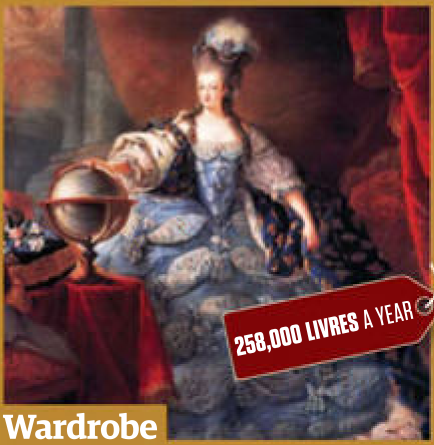
> THE QUEEN, ETERNALLY MODEST, HAD A SPECIAL ROBE MADE FOR HER SO THAT SHE COULD BATHE FULLY CLOTHED



As revolution washed over France, the people called for Marie's blood

A QUEEN'S FAVOURITE THINGS

The extravagant purchases that drove a nation to loathing



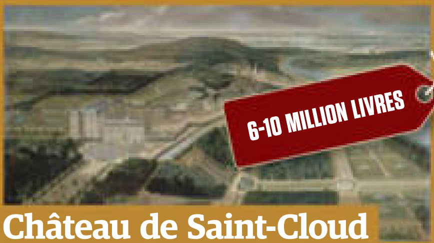
Wardrobe

Officially, Marie had a fixed allowance of 120,000 livres for clothes and accessories. However, she often exceeded this quite considerably. Although she was supposed to restrict her orders to 36 dresses for summer and another 36 for winter, for the fashionable queen this simply wasn't enough. Combined with the 18 pairs of gloves and four pairs of shoes ordered for her on a weekly basis, Marie's wardrobe filled three separate rooms at Versailles.

500,000+ LIVRES

Hameau de la Reine

Marie, constantly surrounded by the rigid structure and responsibility of court life, ordered the construction of this hamlet as a place of escape. Hameau de la Reine was a working farm designed in rustic, pastoral style. There, Marie, her children and friends would dress up as simple peasants, milk the cows and sheep and enjoy the simplicity of the fantasy retreat, while outside the starving and struggles of real French peasants continued.



Château de Saint-Cloud

After falling pregnant again in 1784, Marie convinced the king to purchase this extravagant palace for her on the premise that the air of the commune would be beneficial to her children. As well as the substantial 6 million livres price tag, Marie poured money into redecorating and rebuilding parts of the building and gardens. The French people were shocked, not only at the irresponsible spending but also at the prospect of a queen independently owning her own residence.

GOOD DEEDS

The kind acts that the libelles tried to hide

Housing the homeless

Although the construction of Hameau de la Reine was criticised as the queen playing at being a peasant while her people suffered, she allowed several peasant families to live at the site, building cottages specifically for them. Peasants also maintained the farm and its output.

The beloved couple

When Marie and Louis were married in 1774, many people were killed in a stampede during the celebratory firework display. The newlyweds donated all their private spending money for a year to the suffering victims and families. Marie was well liked at this time.

A sympathetic queen

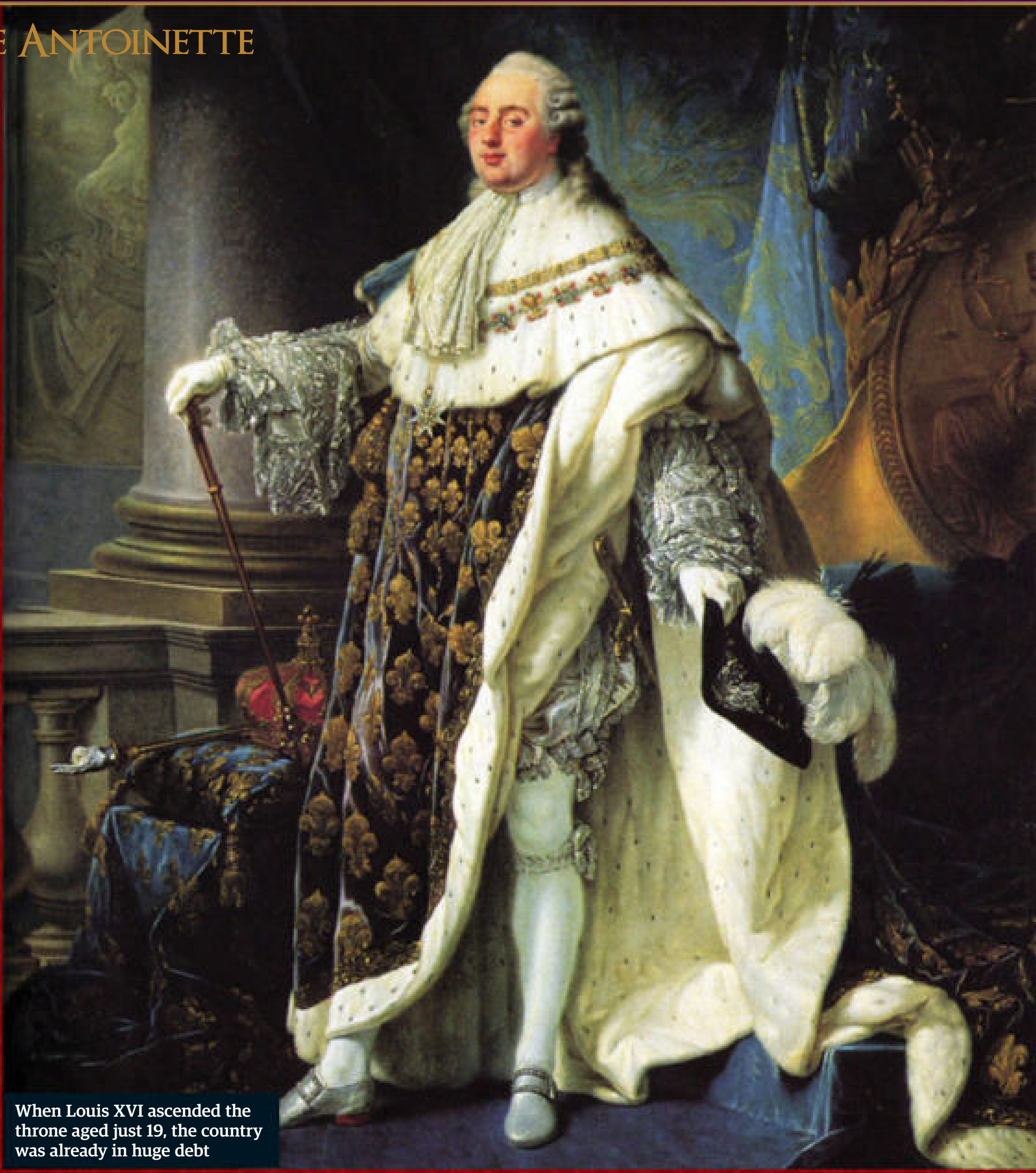
It is very unlikely that Marie uttered the infamous phrase "let them eat cake," in reference to the bread shortages. Her actual recorded words when hearing about the famine were far more sympathetic: "It is quite certain that in seeing the people who treat us so well despite their own misfortune, we are more obliged than ever to work hard for their happiness."

Charitable monarch

The queen and her husband both supported a number of charitable causes. Louis XVI founded the Maison Philanthropique and Marie became a patron of a society that helped the elderly, blind and widowed. She also started a home for unwed mothers.

Sacrifice for the nation

Marie did more than simply pity the suffering peasants. During the famine of 1787-88, her family sold a lot of their flatware to buy grain for the poor. Every Sunday Marie would take a collection for them from the rich of Versailles, and when her people were starving she ate cheap barley bread so more money could be donated.



When Louis XVI ascended the throne aged just 19, the country was already in huge debt

reduce her expenditure, stripping her room of her fineries, but these efforts went largely ignored. When she emerged in her box at the theatre, she was hissed at so horrifically by the crowd that she began to completely withdraw from the woman she once was. She stayed away from parties, from balls, even from the king's council chamber, and devoted her attention to her children, terrified that if she involved herself further, she would be held responsible for tearing France in two.

On 4 June 1789, tragedy struck. The dauphin, Marie's eldest son and all-important heir to the throne, died. The royal couple were overcome with grief for the child they had anticipated for so long, but the people were not. The death, usually cause for national mourning, was ignored by the people desperate to end the famine that was killing their own children. Marie was outraged, and when demand after demand poured through for reform, she urged the king to remain strong against them. For a woman who believed in the absolute power of monarchy, who had spent all her childhood and adult life in palaces, the revolution opposed and offended everything she believed in and had worked for. Now she was ready to use force to get the rebellious masses to understand.

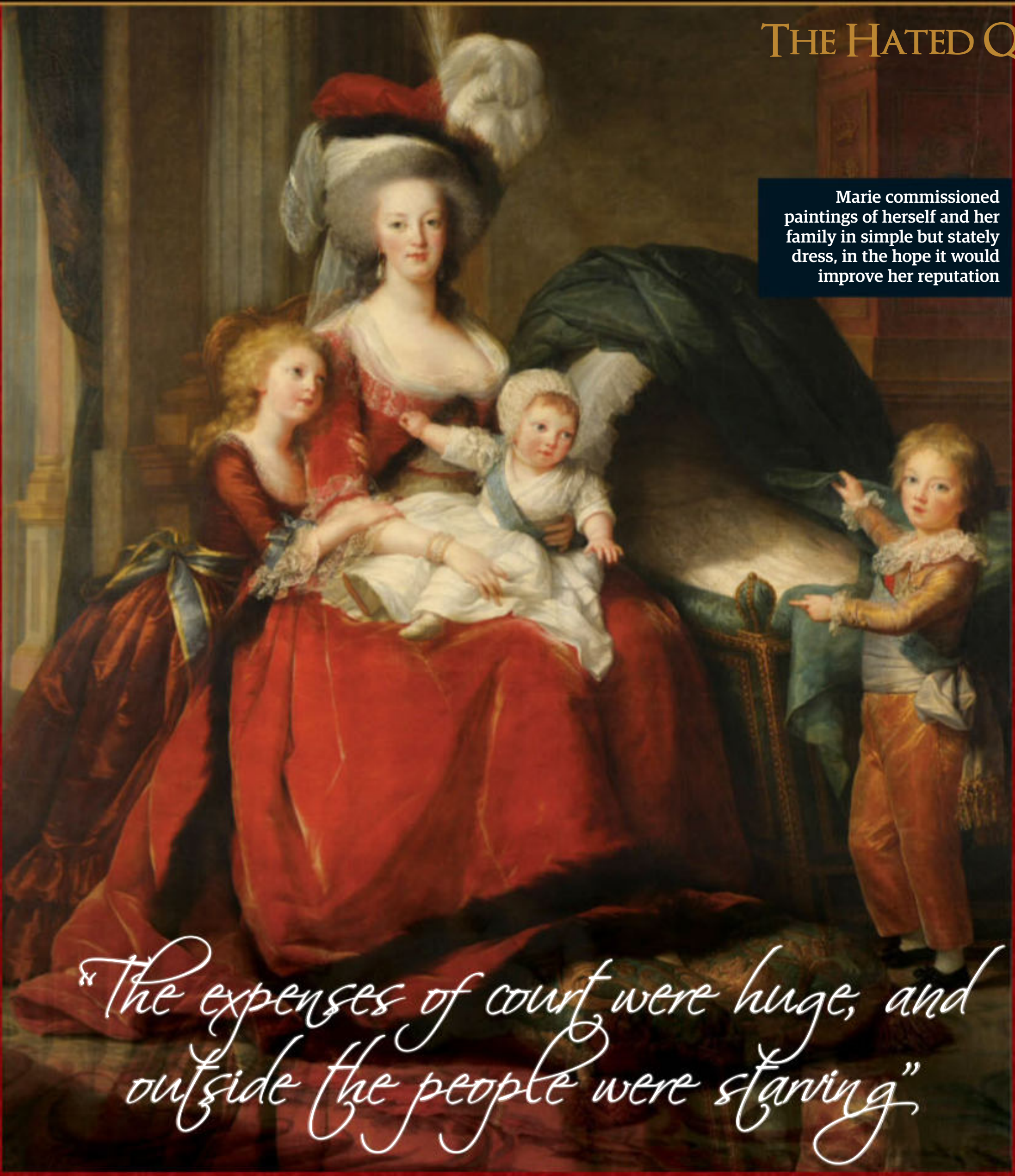
The queen did not understand for one moment the justifications or hopes that underpinned the revolution. All that she witnessed was the brutality and murderous tactics of its leaders, and she wanted to blast every trace of it from existence. What she saw was not liberty, but rebellion and chaos.

The queen decided that the revolution must be crushed with mercenary Germanic troops. She believed, deep down, that the people were good natured and would respect the authority of the monarchy when faced with force. But she was wrong. As news of an armed attack swept through Paris, the revolutionaries took their cause a step further, stormed the Bastille and turned the streets red with blood.

As royalists fled Paris for their lives, the woman most at risk remained with her husband and was forced to stand by as his power was signed away to the National Assembly that was now ruling Paris. But this was not enough for the outraged population. The king had hoped that by agreeing to demands and staying at the palace in Versailles he could keep a low profile until the revolution died down, but on 5 October a mob of outraged women marched from Paris to Versailles. They had one aim in mind, and navigated their way through the palace to Marie's private suite. Fuelled by revolutionary passion, they cut down their foes and sacrificed their own lives to confront Madame Déficit directly.

> MARIE'S EXTRAVAGANT AND LUXURIOUS DRESSES HAD FITTING NAMES, SUCH AS 'HEART'S AGITATION' AND 'STIFLED SIGHS'

Marie had fled, barefoot and half naked, to the king's bedchamber, barely escaping with her life. The mob reformed beneath a balcony and their voices rose in unison as they demanded to see the queen. Marie, who had never bowed to anyone she deemed inferior, was humiliated, but had no choice. Taking her young son and daughter with her, she emerged, straight backed and strong



Marie commissioned paintings of herself and her family in simple but stately dress, in the hope it would improve her reputation

> "The expenses of court were huge, and outside the people were starving"

against the rabble of revolution. She was not humble, not apologetic, nor begging for mercy, but had the iron will of a soldier facing a firing line. Faced with this defiant, unyielding, prideful woman, the crowd bellowed a cry she had not heard for many years: "Long live the queen!"

However, the cries of support did not continue as the royal family was transported from Versailles to their essential captivity in the Tuileries Palace in Paris. Marie sunk down as she sat in the carriage, hoping to avoid the glare and insults of the uncontrollable mob. She loathed the palace. Though it had housed royalty, she had been forced there against her will and in complete humiliation. She was furious that the entire world would now know that the divine right of kings had been challenged and, like a petulant child, refused to do anything that might improve her popularity.

For Marie, the truth was clear – the mob had won, and she refused to remain a prisoner of a force of chaos. After two painful years of her powers being sapped, Marie had had enough and focused on escaping Paris. In 1791, the royal family, disguised as common travellers, were smuggled away in a carriage. The coach travelled some 200 miles, though it was anything but subtle. The queen had refused to travel without all her comforts, and the heavy, slow carriage with its extra horses attracted attention. Their faces were among the most recognisable in the land, and the escapees were inevitably discovered. Disgraced and humiliated, they were forced to make the long journey back to Paris. Dusty, weary and aged beyond her 35 years, as Marie travelled through the crowds to her prison she was spat on, beaten and pushed by the crowds. The monarchs had chosen to abandon their people, so the people made a decision in kind – the monarchy had to go.

The queen knew it was useless to try to find sympathetic ears in France. With the revolution out of control and the hatred against her reaching fever pitch, she appealed to her powerful relations. She pushed her brother, Holy Roman Emperor Leopold II, and his son Francis II to threaten France on her behalf. But this led to France declaring war on Austria on 20 April 1792. Not only was the 'Austrian woman' hated, but now she was also an enemy. Foreign armies poured into France, threatening the people that if any harm was to come to the royal family, they would pay with their lives. But this was a crowd as unrelenting as their queen.

SCANDALOUS HEADLINES

The lies in the libelles were eaten up by the royalty-hating revolutionaries

THE AFFAIRS OF A ROYAL TART

It has been discovered that the queen was visited by her long-time lover Count Axel von Fersen nine months before the birth of the young prince Louis Charles. Knowing of the king's past problems in the bedroom, it's highly likely that the child is a product of the licentious Antoinette's extra-marital affairs.

FILTHY QUEEN'S LESBIAN AFFAIRS EXPOSED

Not only has that Austrian woman been cheating with other men, but now palace sources have revealed that Antoinette also receives many female callers. The infamous English lesbian Baroness Lady Sophie Farrell of Bournemouth and Princesse de Lambelle are just two of her female lovers.

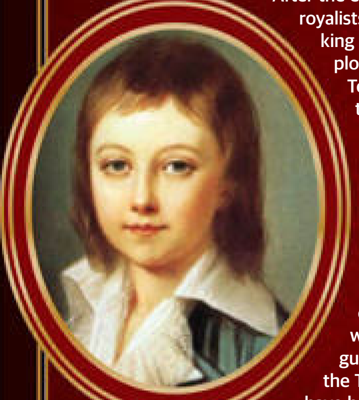
WANTON MARIE'S SHOCKING TALES OF INCEST AND DEBAUCHERY REVEALED

Deplorable accusations have been put against the ex-queen, Widow Capet, at her trial. As well as the various orgies she organised in Versailles, the disgraced woman's sexual deviance apparently knows no bounds, and she is said to have sexually abused her own son, Louis Charles. She refused to respond to this charge.

THE DARK DESTINIES OF THE CHILDREN OF FRANCE

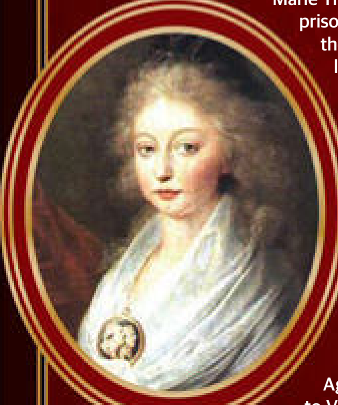
After the execution of their parents, the fate of the royal children was in the hands of their captors

Louis XVII 1785-95

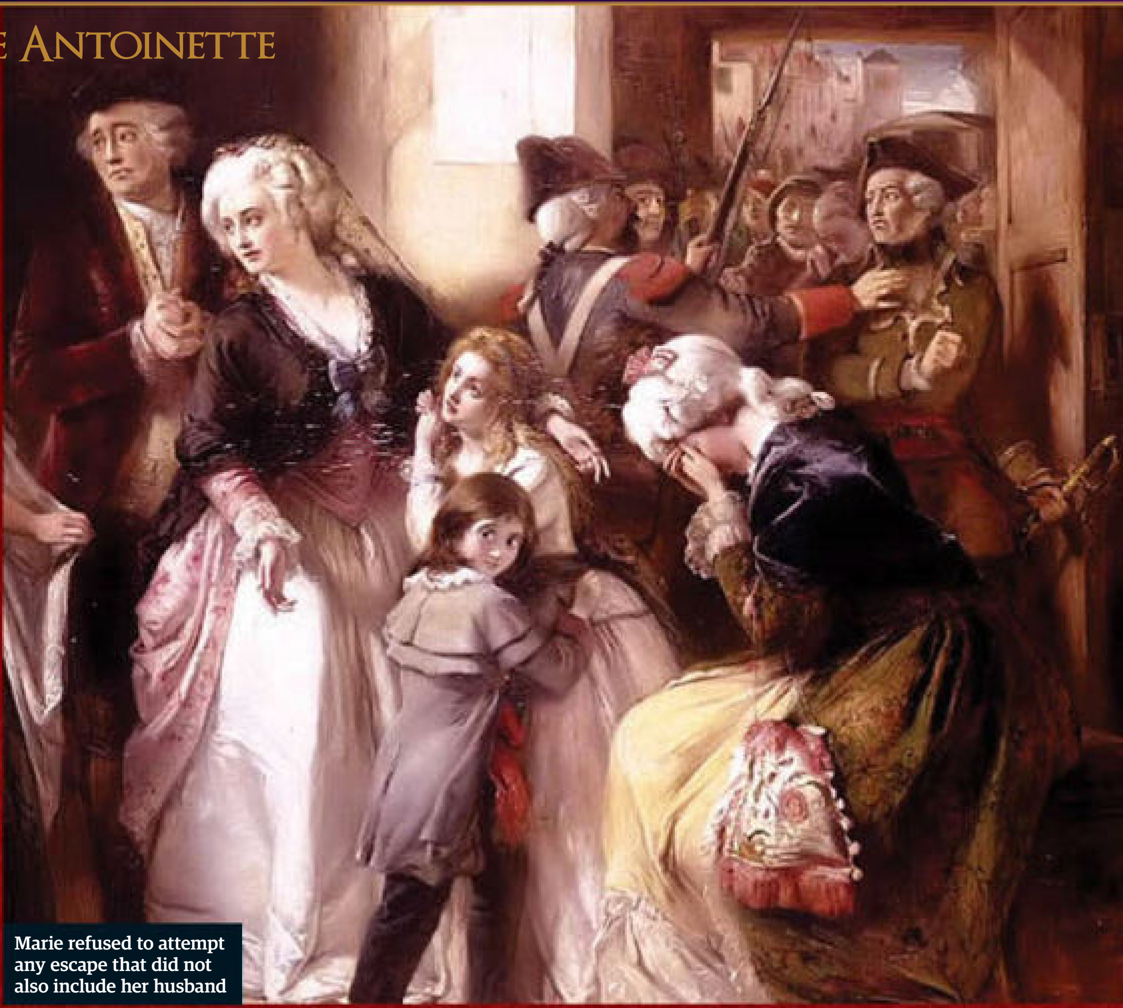


After the execution of his father, the royalists regarded Louis as the true king of France and hatched many plots to free him from the Temple in Paris. To prevent this, he was separated from his mother and placed under the supervision of Antoine Simon, a cobbler. Although his wife, Marie-Jeanne, treated the child with kindness, he was not raised as a prince and had his court manners drilled out of him and replaced with the language of the gutter. When the Simons left the Temple, Louis is reported to have been caged alone in a dark room, his food passed through the bars. Suffering from extreme neglect, the young boy was often abused by his jailers and refused to talk to anyone. By May 1795, he had fallen seriously ill, and he died alone on 8 June, aged ten. It was determined that the cause of death was a lymphadenitis – but this is not without controversy, as it is not usually fatal and was declared to be a long-time illness, but in fact developed very quickly. He was buried in an unmarked grave and when rumours surfaced that the body was not that of the dauphin, hundreds came forward proclaiming to be the lost prince. However, DNA testing in 2000 determined it was indeed Louis.

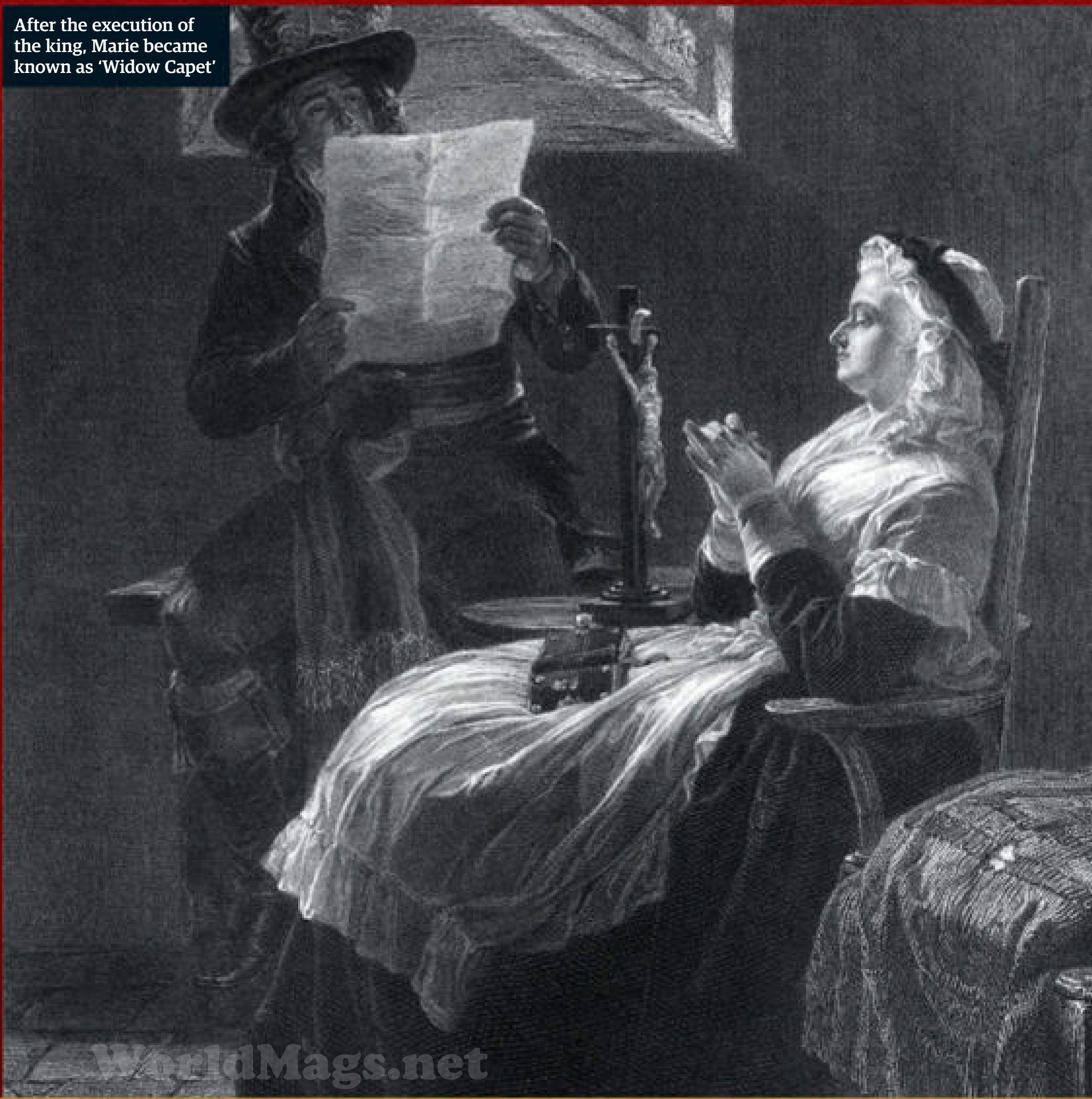
Marie Thérèse 1778-1851



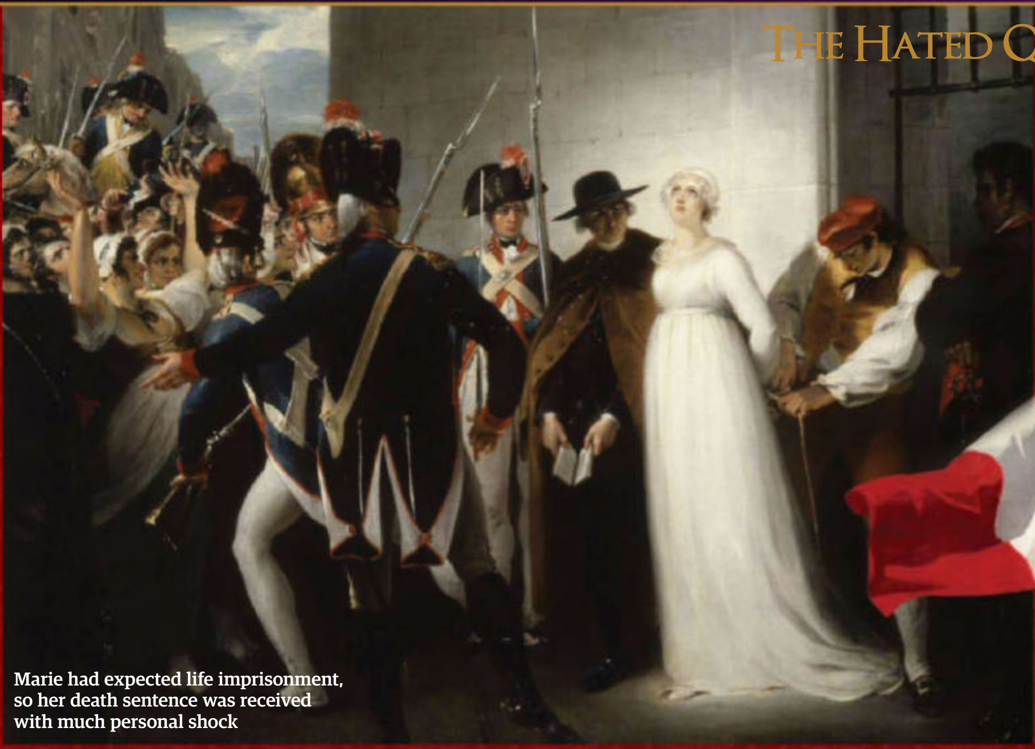
Marie Thérèse was the only royal prisoner in the Temple to survive the Reign of Terror. She lived a life of solitude and boredom in her cell, she was denied any news of her family and was forced to listen to the cries of her young brother as he was abused. Only aware that her father was dead, she scratched the words 'Marie Thérèse Charlotte is the most unhappy person in the world' into the wall of her room. When the terror was over, she was allowed to leave the country. Aged just 16, she was taken to Vienna. She later married her cousin, Louis-Antoine, and lived in exile in Britain. She finally went back to France with the Bourbon restoration in 1814. When Napoleon returned to France in 1815, Marie attempted to rally the troops against him and refused to leave Bordeaux despite Napoleon's demands, leading him to dub her the 'only man in her family'. After the death of Louis XVIII, Marie's husband became heir to the throne, however, the July Revolution forced his abdication and Marie was exiled once again to Britain, where she died of pneumonia aged 72.



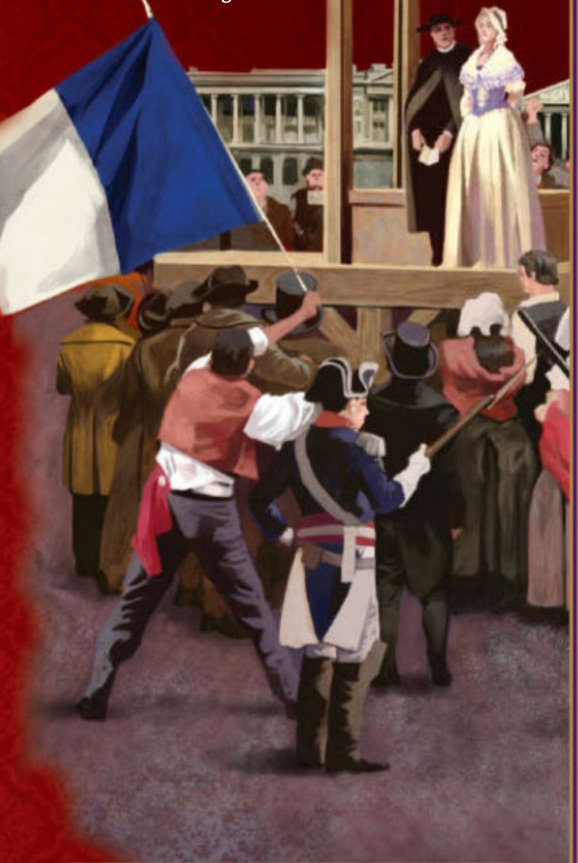
Marie refused to attempt any escape that did not also include her husband



After the execution of the king, Marie became known as 'Widow Capet'



Marie had expected life imprisonment, so her death sentence was received with much personal shock



The executioner chopped off Marie's hair to allow for a clean cut of the guillotine

Marie's actions had brought war to France, and the people brought war to her. On 10 August, an armed mob stormed into the palace, forcing the king and queen into a tiny reporter's box. Under heckles and the glare of the crowd, they stood by helplessly as the 900 Swiss guards charged with defending them were massacred. All their precious objects were gathered and piled on desks as they were forced to listen to the debates that declared a republic and ended the monarchy.

If Marie loathed her imprisonment in the Tuileries, the Temple fortress she and her family were escorted to was another hell entirely. Stripped of all the finery that had for so long defined her, Marie was treated horrifically by her jailers. As well as the constant abuse and insults, they blew smoke in her face and allowed her no privacy. Under such extreme conditions her health deteriorated and she developed tuberculosis. But worse than illness, worse than rags, and worse than jeers, her royal name, her pride and identity had been stripped from her. Royalty no longer, the family was given the name Capet, ending the long line of monarchs that had ruled the country for more than 1,000 years.

In December, Louis, Marie's ever indecisive and conservative husband, was found guilty of high treason and sentenced to death. A month later he was executed. Although the royal couple had always been a mismatched pair, and rumours of Marie seeking comfort elsewhere may not have been entirely untrue, he had been the father of her children, her companion for more than 20 years and her only security in time of terror and uncertainty. There is no doubt that his execution shocked and saddened Marie to her core.

She had always found comfort in her children, but in July, despite her pleas, her beloved son was taken from her, and in September she was taken from the only family she had left - her daughter and sister in law. She was condemned to a month of horrific solitary confinement in a dank underground cell in the Conciergerie. Under constant surveillance, she had no chance of escape, but she would not have to wait long to discover her fate.

On 14 October, Marie was taken to face her enemies at the Revolutionary Tribunal. The charges against her were more an attack on her person than her politics; the headlines that had filled the libelles were presented as fact. They accused her of organising orgies in Versailles, orchestrating the massacre of the Swiss guards, sending France's money to Austria and, most appalling of all, sexually abusing her own son. At this she refused to respond, simply uttering: "If I make no reply, it is because I cannot. I appeal to all mothers in this audience." Her unbelievable defiance and strength despite the horrors she had endured was remarkable, but the verdict had been decided before she even entered the room. Guilty.

In her execution, Marie displayed the courage and markings of a true queen until the end. But that was the problem exactly: she was a queen in every sense of the word. She was born to be a queen, trained to be a queen, had performed her duties as queen throughout her entire life - but France didn't want a queen. Her lifeless body was dragged from the guillotine and tossed in a cart and her head was thrown between her legs. Her remains were dumped in an unmarked grave, but the memory of Marie Antoinette would live on as France's hated, but eternal, queen.

> VERSAILLES SMELLED AWFUL DURING THE ERA, SO MARIE'S ROOMS WERE SCENTED WITH FLOWERS, POTPOURRI AND PERFUMES

EXPERT OPINION

Melanie Clegg is the author of five historical novels and is also a regular contributor to *Majesty* magazine and her own women's history blog *Madame Guillotine*. Her first biography, *Marie Antoinette: An Intimate History* is out now and her second biography, *A Life Of Marie De Guise*, is due to be published by Pen and Sword Books in 2016.

Was Marie really to blame for the French Revolution, or was she simply a scapegoat?
Although the image of the flaunting, extravagant queen causing the French Revolution with her careless profligacy is a potent one, the fact is that the revolution was ultimately the result of centuries of fiscal and social inequality. A series of poor harvests and the ruinously expensive involvement in the American Revolution acted as the catalyst in 1789. Marie Antoinette, the unpopular foreign queen who was commonly believed to be the power behind the throne, while at the same time in league with the Austrians, was a convenient scapegoat for all - for the aristocracy, who had no wish to lose their privileges; the middle classes, who resented the power and privilege of the upper classes; and the lower orders, who believed the scurrilous lies and exaggerations being spread by disaffected members of the aristocracy and even the royal family about the queen's personal life and spending habits.

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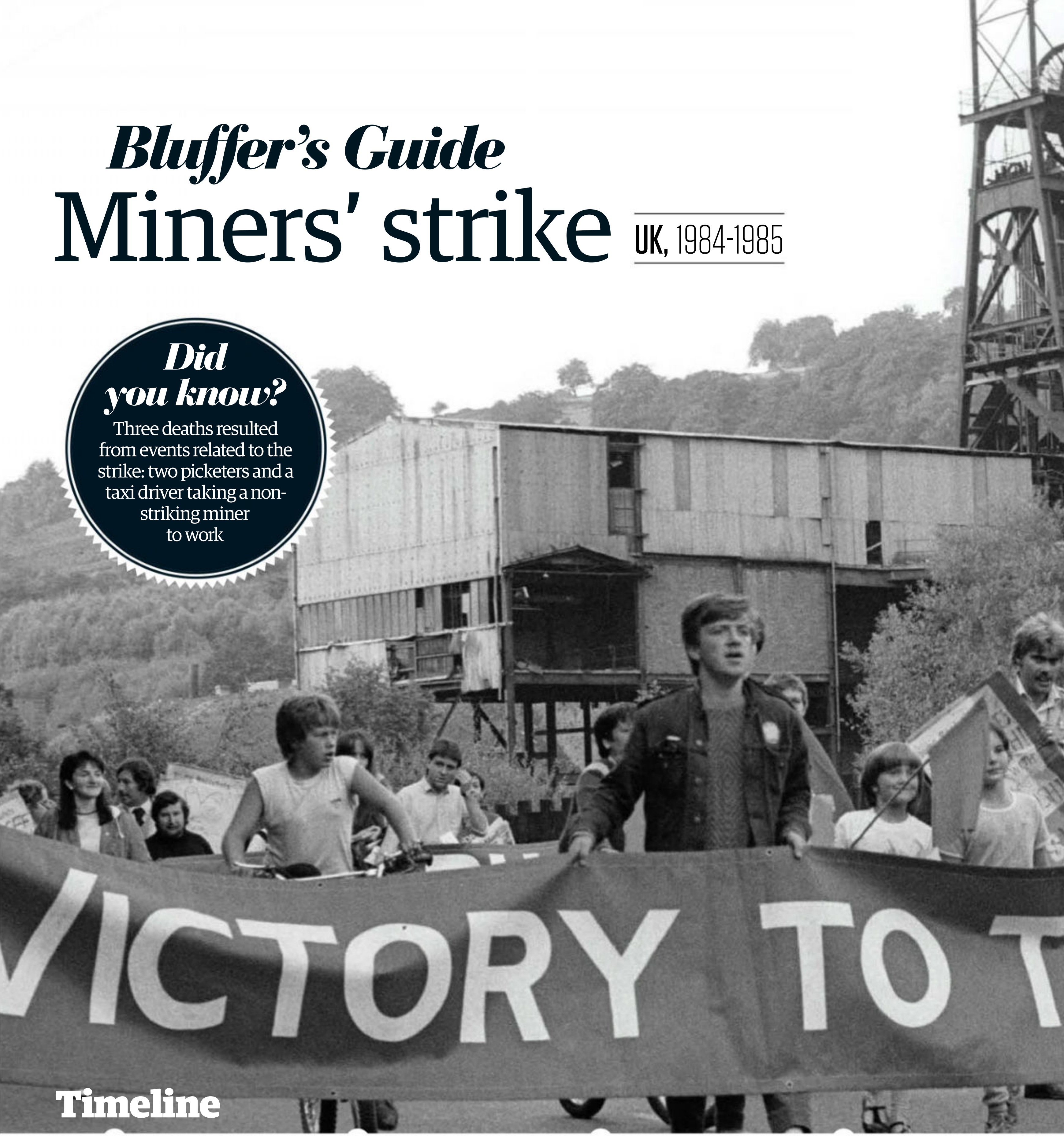
Bluffer's Guide

Miners' strike

UK, 1984-1985



Did you know?

Three deaths resulted from events related to the strike: two picketers and a taxi driver taking a non-striking miner to work

Timeline

1 JANUARY 1947

Britain's coal industry is nationalised by Clement Attlee's Labour government, which sees improvements in miners' working conditions and pay.

9 JANUARY 1972

Pay cuts and large-scale closures of collieries as a result of the energy market's move towards oil and nuclear power lead to a national strike.

4 MAY 1979

Margaret Thatcher becomes prime minister, with a primary objective to lower inflation. Two million jobs in the manufacturing sector are lost.

6 MARCH 1984

The National Coal Board announces that they intend to close down 20 mines. Six days later, the NUM leadership declares a national strike.

Young Socialists
L.P.Y.S SAY
FIGHT
THE TORIES
-JOIN US TO GET RID OF THE TORIES NOW
THE MINER

What was it?

The UK miners' strike was a year-long national strike undertaken by the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). It began on 6 March with miners in the Yorkshire coal field, and on 12 March the NUM president Arthur Scargill called for strike action in all coal fields. Initially, almost all miners in Yorkshire, Scotland, the north east and Kent observed the strike, but miners in the Midlands and North Wales - those least threatened by the pit closures - were more reluctant to join.

Picketing became a daily event, often aggressive, and sometimes ending in violence. The most infamous clash is known as the Battle of Orgreave, which took place on 18 June 1984 at a mine near Rotherham. It involved a confrontation between 5,000 miners and 4,000-8,000 police officers. 51 picketers and 72 policemen were injured, and 93 people were arrested, including Scargill himself. As time went on, hungry strikers became desperate and returned to work. With NUM funds almost exhausted, the strike was officially declared over on 3 March 1985.

Why did it happen?

By the 1980s, the coal industry in Britain was at death's door. The mines had been nationalised in 1947 and the National Coal Board (NCB) was created to run the UK's 958 collieries. It set up a development programme aimed at improving working conditions, which, for a while, seemed to have been successful - the NCB offered sick pay and improved safety. But as competition from oil and nuclear power increased, miners' wages fell behind those of other industrial workers, and in 1972 British miners went on strike for the first time in more than 40 years. When the Conservatives came to power in 1979 with Thatcher at the helm, its priority was to reduce inflation and government subsidies. Coal mines were one of the first industries to be hit and in 1984, the NCB announced they would be closing 20 mines, leaving 20,000 jobless. The strike was declared six days later.

KENT NUM
Support the miners fight for jobs

NUM branches around the country called for the public's support

Who was involved?

Arthur Scargill
1938-present
A former miner and president of the NUM, Scargill led the strike and was a strong opponent of the Conservatives.

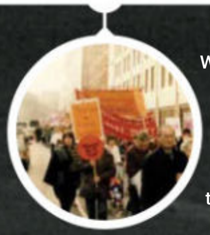
Margaret Thatcher
1925-2013
Leader of the Conservatives and British Prime Minister, Thatcher was responsible for the closure and privatisation of coal mines.

Ian MacGregor
1912-98
MacGregor was head of the National Coal Board and a fierce supporter of Thatcher's industrial restructuring programme.

18 JUNE 1984

Picketing miners clash with police at a coking plant in South Yorkshire. 93 people are arrested and more than 100 are injured during the strike action.

3 MARCH 1985



With miners' families struggling to survive, and a slide in public and media support, the NUM vote to return to the coal mines.

© Alamy

HELMETS

Whether for sport, war or work, helmets and headgear have been imperative for the protection of the human bonce for centuries

The empire's skilled armourers made the Coolus out of sheets of iron or brass, ready to be used on the frontline

PICKELHAUBE 1842

One of the most iconic helmets of all time, the Pickelhaube was made from a combination of brass plates and black lacquered leather with a striking spike on top. Throughout its lifespan it was constantly updated and reached its zenith in 1914, before being slowly phased out by the new Stahlhelm, which served Germany well into the Third Reich. The Stahlhelm was actually used in greater numbers on the Western Front, but it is the Pickelhaube that evokes the memory of Germany in World War I.

Although perceived as quintessentially German, the Pickelhaube was actually used by the US Army in the late-19th century

King Frederick William IV of Prussia

1795-1861, PRUSSIAN

The king of his country for 21 years, Frederick did not have the respect of his people and was nearly disposed of in the revolution of 1848. Despite his erratic leadership, the king was intelligent and had a talent for invention, hence his role in the development of the Pickelhaube.

KABUTO 15TH CENTURY

Coming in many different shapes and sizes, the kabuto symbolised Japanese warfare and the iconic image of the samurai. A protective helmet as well as an artistic expression, kabutos were custom made and demonstrated Japanese skill in metallurgy. In later models, mengu armour would protect the face along with a steel-plated neck guard, which was invaluable in defending against katana slashes. The helmet is kept in place by a silken rope tie securing the kabuto to the head. It continues to act as a talisman in the Land of the Rising Sun.

A bowl-like shape, the kabuto's 52 ridged plates protect the owner's head

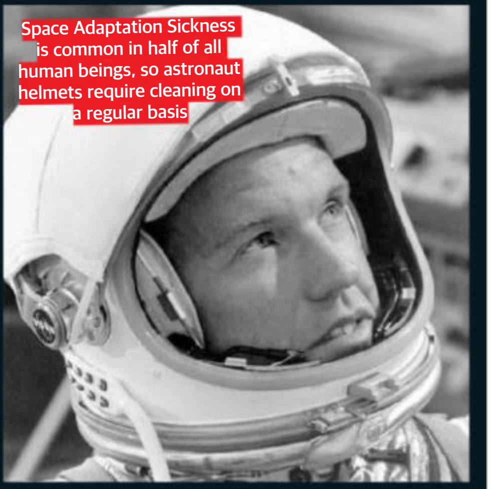
COOLUS HELMET 2ND CENTURY

Alongside the Montefortino helmets, the Coolus was the helmet of choice for Roman legionaries. The Coolus was made out of metal and came complete with face and neck coverage to protect against barbarian blows from any direction. Unique to the Coolus was a 7.5 centimetre (3 inch) overhang, which defended the legionary from broadsword attacks. In Ancient Rome, helmets were known as 'Galea' or 'Cassis' and could be adorned, especially in the army's higher ranks, with feathers and crests that would stand out when on parade.

As weapons on the Medieval battlefield got deadlier, helmets had to improve in strength to protect knights

KNIGHT'S HELMET 12TH CENTURY

There were countless types of Medieval helmets used by the knights of the realm. Early designs favoured by the likes of the Normans had an open conical top, but a knight's helmet really came into its own with the advent of closed helms. Visors were now on hinges, so the wearer could have it open with a full field of vision but also closed to be protected in the heat of battle. Wealthier knights decorated their helms with artwork and encrusted them with jewels to show their rank and coat of arms.



Space Adaptation Sickness is common in half of all human beings, so astronaut helmets require cleaning on a regular basis

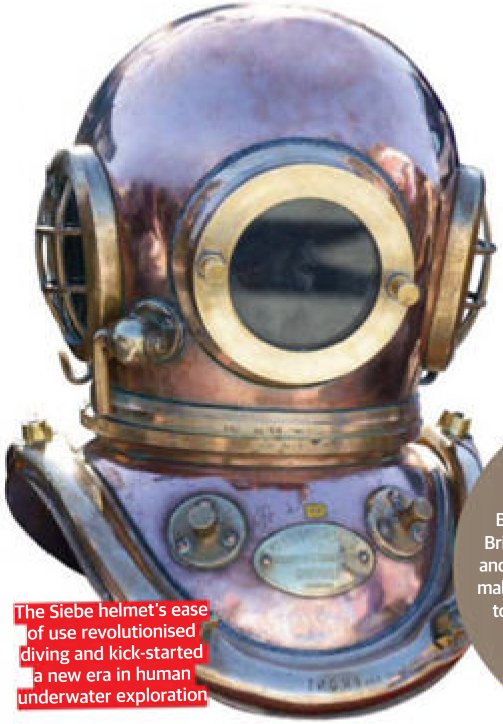
ASTRONAUT HELMET 1958

Since the Mercury spacesuit in 1958, the helmets worn by astronauts and cosmonauts have been constantly improved and developed as the wearer needs to be protected from micrometeoroids and solar ultraviolet and infrared radiation. The helmets worn on the Apollo missions were made out of strengthened polycarbonate and were attached to the suit by a pressure-sealing neck ring. More up-to-date versions include microphones, cameras, feed ports for astronauts on a space walk and other gizmos.

This helmet was used by the Red Bull Racing team in the 2015 Australian Grand Prix and is packed full of safety technology

FORMULA ONE HELMET 2015

One of the first Formula One racing helmets was the Bell 500, which was created in 1954, but the technology really came into its own after the increased safety measures put in place following Niki Lauda's crash in the 1976 German Grand Prix. From here on out, new tough yet lightweight polymers were used in helmet technology, such as carbon fibre and Kevlar. It is also essential that the visor was as clear as possible and the material used was fire resistant and aerodynamic. Today's racing helmets contain state-of-the-art technology such as heart-rate monitors, but cannot include too much tech as it would be a distraction the the driver.



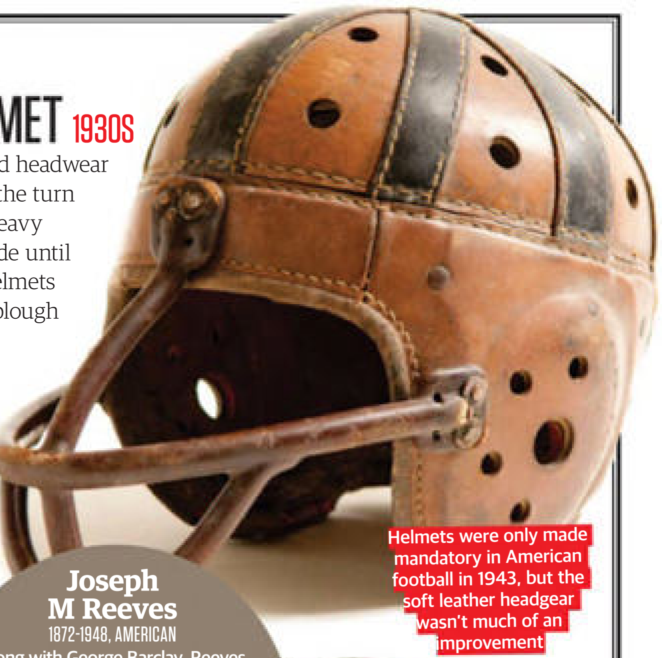
The Siebe helmet's ease of use revolutionised diving and kick-started a new era in human underwater exploration

SIEBE DIVING HELMET 1839

This iconic copper design officially replaced the older Deane model after being approved by the navy just a year after it was introduced. Known as a 12-bolt helmet, it was unlike previous designs as it had an oval side window and was clamped to a breastplate for added protection when underwater, forming part of a new 'closed diving dress'. Helmets weren't the end of the road for the Siebe Company, who also made underwater cameras.

AMERICAN FOOTBALL HELMET 1930S

Now an essential part of gridiron, helmets and headwear came to prominence in American football at the turn of the 20th century. Originally made out of heavy leather and padding, lighter designs were made until the advent of plastic helmets in the 1950s. Helmets became safe enough to be used tactically to plough through the field, but they became high tech as well, with a rule passed in 1995 that all quarterbacks must have a radio transmitter installed to hear their team's coach. The first prototypes had dodgy receivers and could sometimes be cut off or even pick up chat on other frequencies.



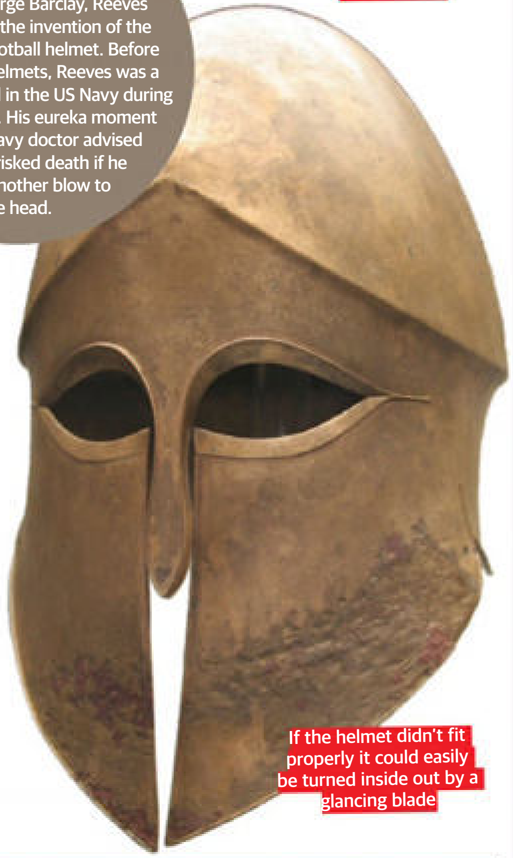
Helmets were only made mandatory in American football in 1943, but the soft leather headgear wasn't much of an improvement

> "The Coolus came complete with face and neck coverage to protect against barbarian blows"

Joseph M Reeves
1872-1948, AMERICAN
Along with George Barclay, Reeves is credited with the invention of the first American football helmet. Before making sports helmets, Reeves was a renowned Admiral in the US Navy during both world wars. His eureka moment came after a navy doctor advised him that he risked death if he received another blow to the head.

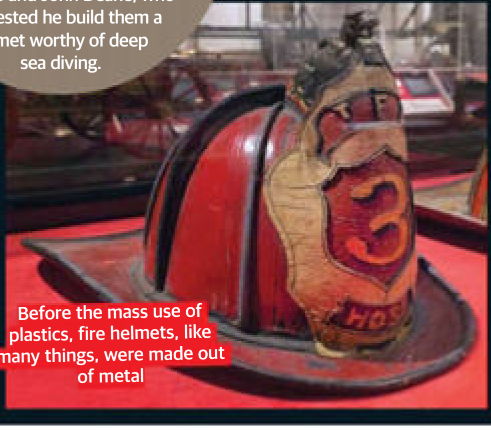
CORINTHIAN HELMET
8TH CENTURY BCE

Headgear that completely conceals facial expressions, the Corinthian helmet was used all over Greece, but most famously by the Spartans. Superseding the Illyrian helmet, the bronze mask gets its name from the Ancient Greek state of Corinth. It was very sturdy, but the lack of padding made it uncomfortable and the small space for the eyes made seeing clearly an issue. Additionally, the mask had to be made to fit each individual soldier, so production was time consuming and not cost effective. It was soon replaced by more open designs such as the Pilos helmet. Still looked great in *300* though...



If the helmet didn't fit properly it could easily be turned inside out by a glancing blade

Augustus Siebe
1788-1872, PRUSSIAN
Born in Prussia, Siebe moved to Britain after the Battle of Waterloo and trained as an engineer. Initially a maker of water pumps, Siebe moved to London and was contacted by Charles and John Deane, who requested he build them a helmet worthy of deep sea diving.



Before the mass use of plastics, fire helmets, like many things, were made out of metal

FIREFIGHTER HELMET 1881

Fighting fire is one of the most dangerous professions, so as well as a top-notch extinguisher, every fire service needs a tough helmet. Perhaps the most iconic of them all is the leatherhead helmet that was frequently used in the USA and has become the stereotypical firefighter's helmet. Also popular was the Merryweather helmet, which was used extensively in Victorian Britain. More recent headgear can help the firefighter navigate safely through thick smoke and utilises noise-cancelling technology to aid concentration in the most raging of infernos.

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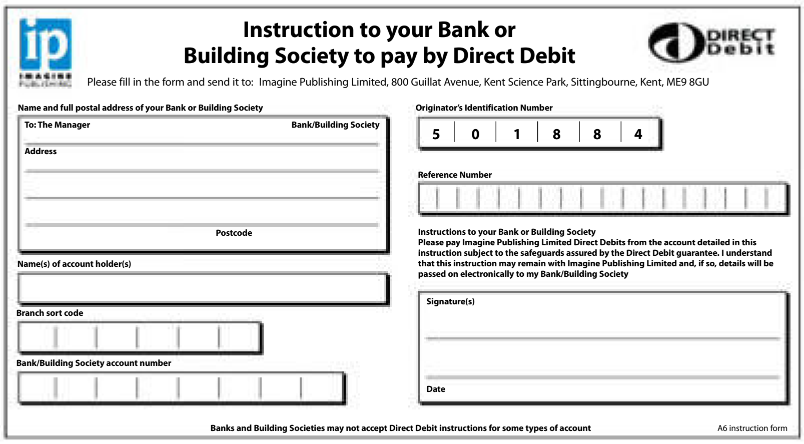

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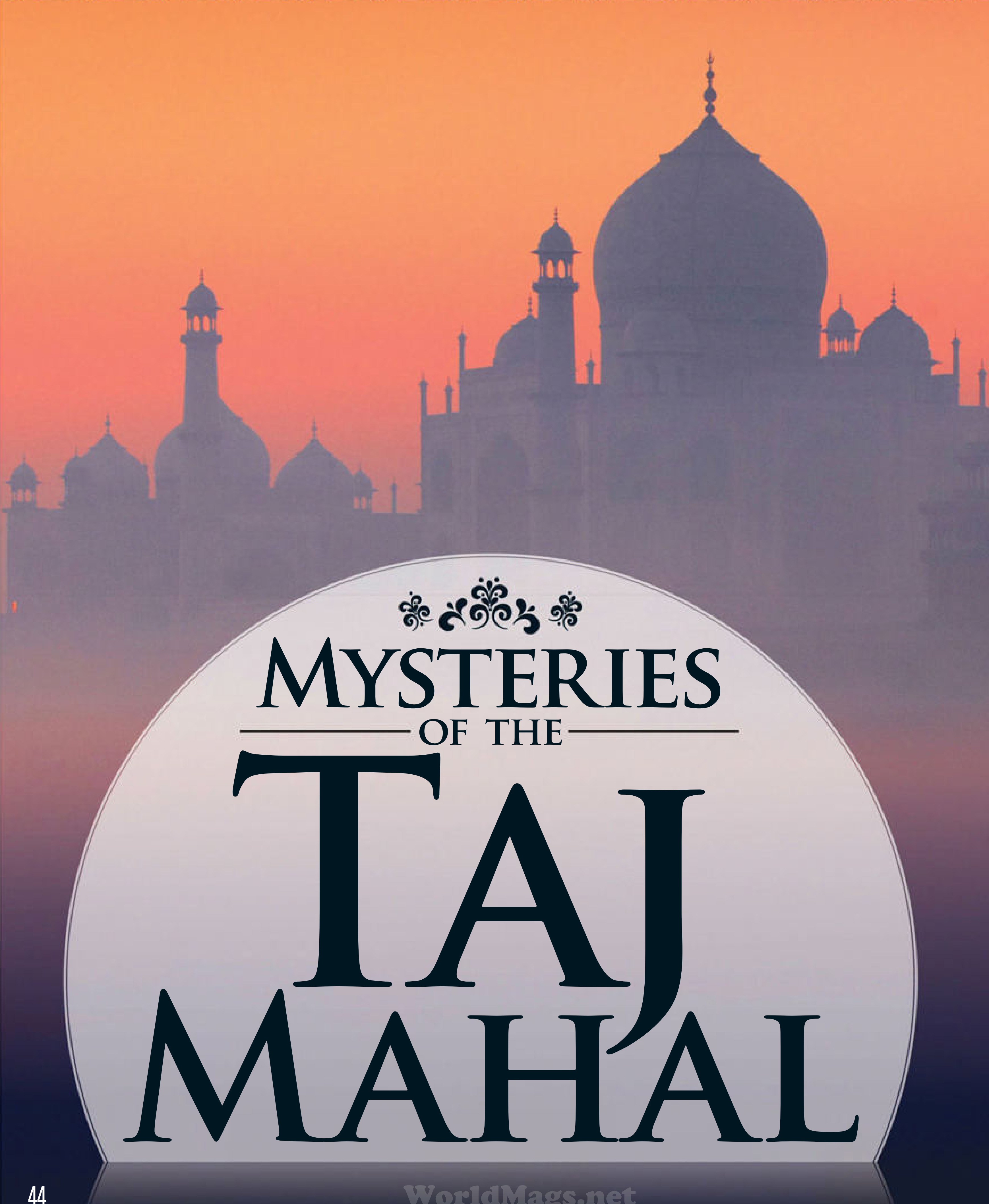


MYSTERIES
OF THE
TAJ MAHAL

Many claim that the mausoleum of the Mughal empress Mumtaz Mahal in Agra is the world's most exquisite building. It is also arguably the greatest assertion of a husband's love

Written by John Man

Shah Jahan, proclaimed the fifth ruler of north India's Mughal Empire in 1628, was well equipped for his role as leader, partly because in a world of intrigue and war he was well advised by his beloved queen, Arjumand Banu, better known by the title that was conferred upon her by her husband: Mumtaz Mahal, or 'the chosen one of the palace'.

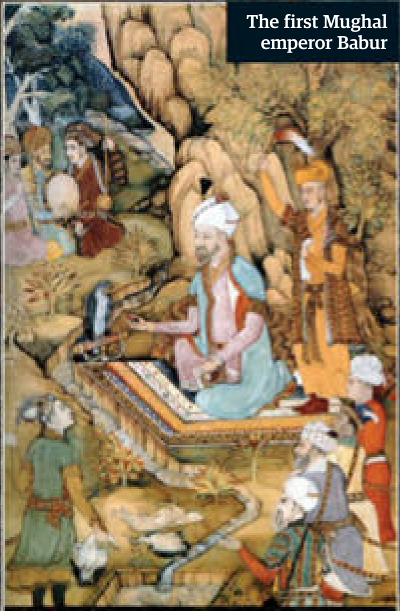
The two had become engaged more than 20 years before, when he was 15 and she 14. Tradition claims that Prince Khurram - the name given to Shah Jahan at birth - spotted her selling silk and beads in a bazaar and fell in love at first sight. In truth she was the daughter of an Afghan family who were well placed at court, both her grandfather and father having held top ministerial positions. The couple's engagement lasted for five years, for unknown reasons, and Shah Jahan had two children by other women before he eventually married her in 1612.

By then he was the acknowledged heir to the throne. He was the third son of the future emperor Jahangir and grandson of the great Akbar, who had secured the conquests of his father Babur and extended Mughal rule into central India. A monarch, he said, "should be ever intent on conquests." It was Akbar who gave Khurram his name, and when a soothsayer predicted greatness for the boy, Akbar took him under his wing and handed him over to his childless wife, Ruqaiya, for education and safekeeping. He was raised in her loving care, and, after his father Jahangir succeeded in 1605, groomed as heir apparent in the confines of Agra's vast Red Fort, the main Mughal palace.

Aged 22, he was put to the test by his father as commander of a 200,000-strong army sent to crush the Rajuts to the south, who, as Hindus, had been fighting the Mughals for the previous 80 years. A devastating campaign led to victory and a treaty by which the Rajputs acknowledged the Mughals as overlords. Two years later, Jahangir sent him to extend Mughal rule over the Deccan (today's Madhya Pradesh) in south-central India. He was only partially successful, but in recognition of his achievements Jahangir awarded him the title of Shah Jahan, Persian for 'king of the world', by which he became best known.

The court, a close-knit network of blood relatives and relatives by marriage, was torn by rivals, most notably his wife's father, Asaf Khan, who was also his step-mother's brother. Asaf Khan turned against emperor Jahangir, and in 1622 Shah Jahan joined him. For four years he was a rebel, until Jahangir crushed the uprising, bringing his son back into court and retaining him as heir.

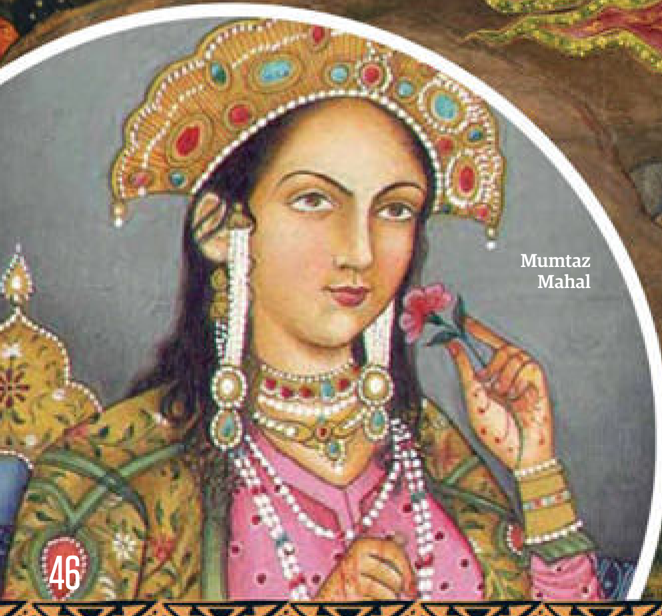
Meanwhile, Mumtaz Mahal had become Shah Jahan's one true love. She was famously beautiful. As the *Imperial Chronicle* put it: "Even the moon hides from her beauty in shame." They were



The first Mughal emperor Babur

The Rise of the Mughals

The Mughals looked back over 400 years, to Mongolia in the early 13th century, when Genghis Khan was on his way to build the greatest land empire ever. His realm was inherited and doubled in size by his grandson, Kublai Khan, nominal ruler of one-fifth of all humanity. Less than a century after Kublai's death, the Mongol Empire collapsed, but it inspired another would-be world conqueror, Timur, often known in English as Tamburlaine. Though Turkic, Islamic and born in today's Uzbekistan, with nothing Mongolian about him, he dreamed of emulating Genghis, but died in 1405 while invading China. Five generations later, when Timur's empire vanished, his descendant Babur fled to north India and founded the Mughul (or Moghul) dynasty, its name being an echo of its tenuous Mongol roots. Babur's grandson Akbar made it India's dominant power, uniting all north India in a model of peace, sumptuous art and religious tolerance. The empire was inherited in 1628 by his grandson, Khurram, better known by his title Shah Jahan.



Mumtaz Mahal

devoted to each other. The *Chronicle* records their "mutual affection and harmony" and goes on: "The intimacy, deep affection, attention and favour that his Majesty had for the chosen one of the palace exceeded by a thousand times what he felt for any other." She was also his "associate, companion, close confidante and intimate friend." They were seldom apart, even when he was campaigning.

After he was crowned emperor in 1628, she became part of her husband's lavish court life, and was with him when he led an army to finish the task of conquering the Deccan. In June 1631 they were in Burhanpur, 700 kilometres (434 miles) from Agra, on the southern fringe of the empire. Mumtaz, aged 37, had borne him 13 children, though only seven had survived, and was about to go into labour again. But this time things went wrong. She haemorrhaged. Knowing her end was near, she sent her eldest daughter to summon the emperor. There was nothing to be done. Traditional accounts claim she asked for a mausoleum finer than any other, and then, on 17 June, she died while he looked on helplessly. The baby, a girl called Gauhara, would live until the age of 75.

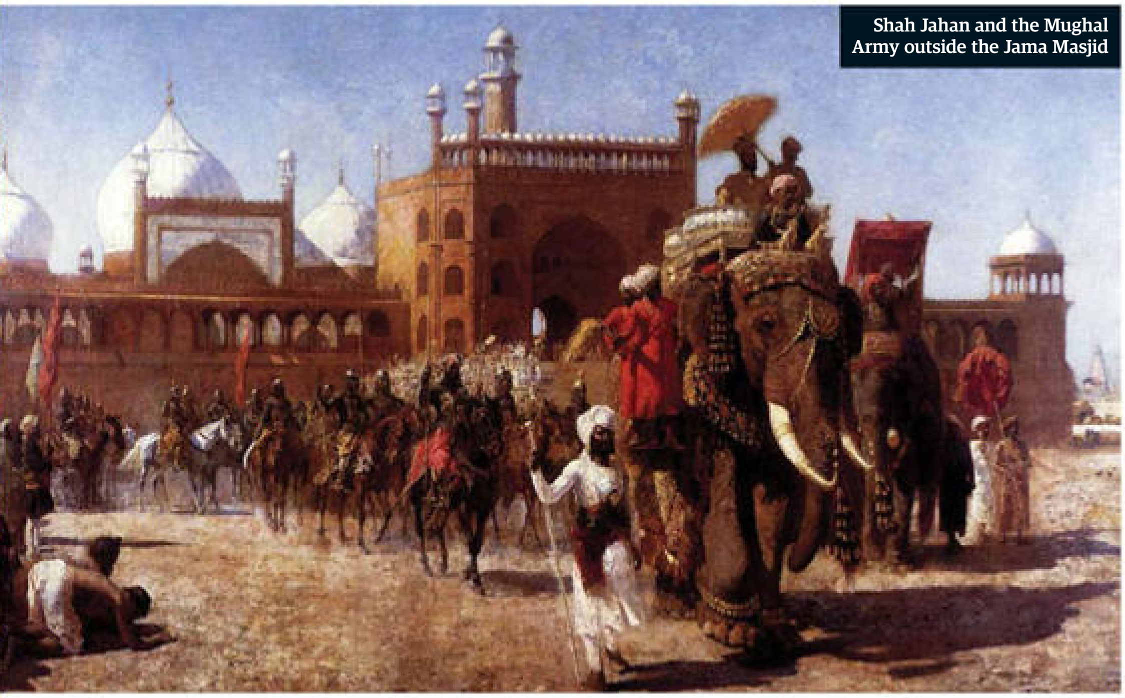
Shah Jahan was utterly broken. He fasted for a week, banned all entertainment and for two years wore only the simplest clothes. The strain of mourning aged him. His salt-and-pepper beard turned white. He acquired a stoop. Meanwhile, the queen's body was taken back to Agra and placed in the riverside garden of a nobleman, which Shah Jahan had bought as the site for her mausoleum.

He chose well. The site stands on the south bank of the River Yamuna (or Jamna), on a U-bend, with a view of the river to right and left and within sight of many of Agra's 44 riverside gardens, and of the vast fort that was the principal palace of the early Mughal emperors. The decision, marked by a great feast, was followed by meticulous planning overseen by a master architect named Ahmad Lahawri, a Persian from Badakshan in today's Afghanistan, who was also the court's official historian. It is almost certain that Shah Jahan himself, an expert in architecture and decoration, was closely involved with the design, perhaps even the chief designer.

> "THIS RESTING PLACE FOR HIS WIFE WOULD BE GRANDER THAN ANY PREVIOUS CREATIONS"

He had precedents to inspire him, in particular Persian traditions and the mausoleums of his father and grandfather. This resting place for his wife, though, would be grander than any previous creations, acting as both tomb and a place of pilgrimage, with gardens, minarets, towers and a dome, all probably planned using wooden models, if records of other projects are anything to go by. It would be clad in white marble carved and inlaid with incomparable decorations, in a setting to match. The tomb's white marble, representing Brahmin purity and authority, would contrast with the red sandstone of subsidiary buildings, symbolising the earthiness of the Kshatriya warrior caste.

Before building work could get started, there were problems to be solved. The Taj Mahal, the 'Crown of Palaces', was to be set on a curving


Shah Jahan and the Mughal Army outside the Jama Masjid

* * *

ARCHITECTURE OF THE GOLDEN AGE

Shah Jahan, an expert patron of architecture, saw Mughal styles reach their high point. Mughal buildings combine domes, minarets, halls, vaulted gateways and delicate ornamentation

Red Fort, Delhi
The red sandstone fort was the centre of Mughal government from 1648. With numerous pavilions in different styles, it is considered the peak of Mughal architectural creativity. Its architect was also the chief designer of the Taj Mahal.

The Fort, Agra
This vast red sandstone 94-acre palace and citadel was Mughal leader Akbar's first great architectural project. He made it the centre point of the Mughal Empire and its treasure house. Some 4,000 labourers spent eight years building it.

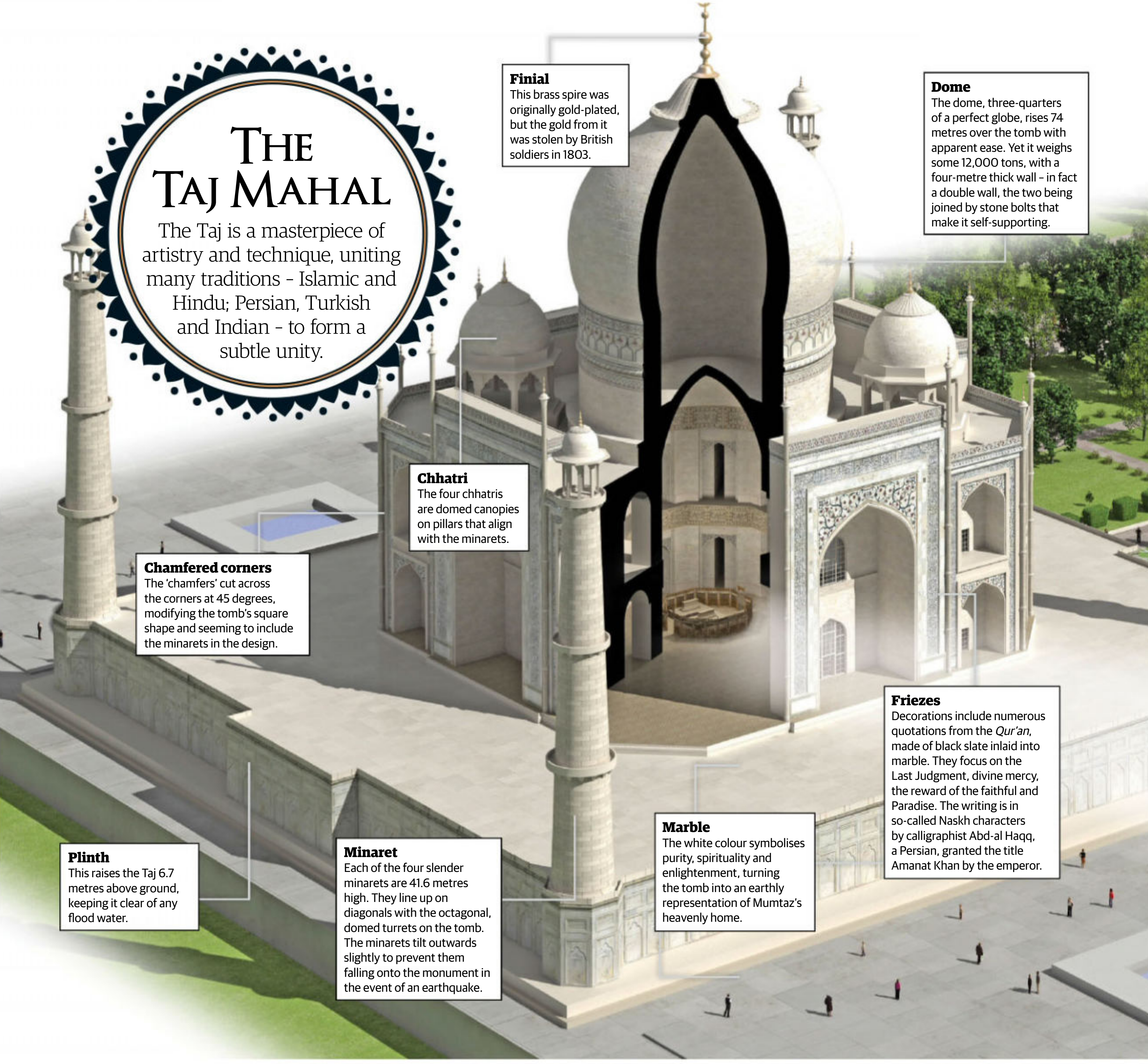
Jama Masjid, Agra
Shah Jahan ordered work to start on the 'Friday Mosque' in 1648. Built for his eldest daughter Jahanara, it took 5,000 workers six years to finish the sandstone and marble building, including its three domes and wing-like cloisters.

Wazir Khan Mosque, Lahore
This mosque in Lahore, built in 1635-42, is named after the man known as the Wazir Khan, the 'vizier ruler', who was Shah Jahan's physician and governor of Lahore. It is famed for its glazed tiles, especially those in cobalt.

The Shalimar Gardens, Lahore
Created in 1641-42, the gardens' three terraces and 410 fountains are surrounded by a wall patterned with fretwork. The fountains fill lakes that provide welcome relief to visitors during blistering summers.

THE TAJ MAHAL

The Taj is a masterpiece of artistry and technique, uniting many traditions - Islamic and Hindu; Persian, Turkish and Indian - to form a subtle unity.



Finial
This brass spire was originally gold-plated, but the gold from it was stolen by British soldiers in 1803.

Dome
The dome, three-quarters of a perfect globe, rises 74 metres over the tomb with apparent ease. Yet it weighs some 12,000 tons, with a four-metre thick wall – in fact a double wall, the two being joined by stone bolts that make it self-supporting.

Chhatri
The four chhatris are domed canopies on pillars that align with the minarets.

Chamfered corners
The 'chamfers' cut across the corners at 45 degrees, modifying the tomb's square shape and seeming to include the minarets in the design.

Friezes
Decorations include numerous quotations from the *Qur'an*, made of black slate inlaid into marble. They focus on the Last Judgment, divine mercy, the reward of the faithful and Paradise. The writing is in so-called Naskh characters by calligraphist Abd-al Haqq, a Persian, granted the title Amanat Khan by the emperor.

Plinth
This raises the Taj 6.7 metres above ground, keeping it clear of any flood water.

Minaret
Each of the four slender minarets are 41.6 metres high. They line up on diagonals with the octagonal, domed turrets on the tomb. The minarets tilt outwards slightly to prevent them falling onto the monument in the event of an earthquake.

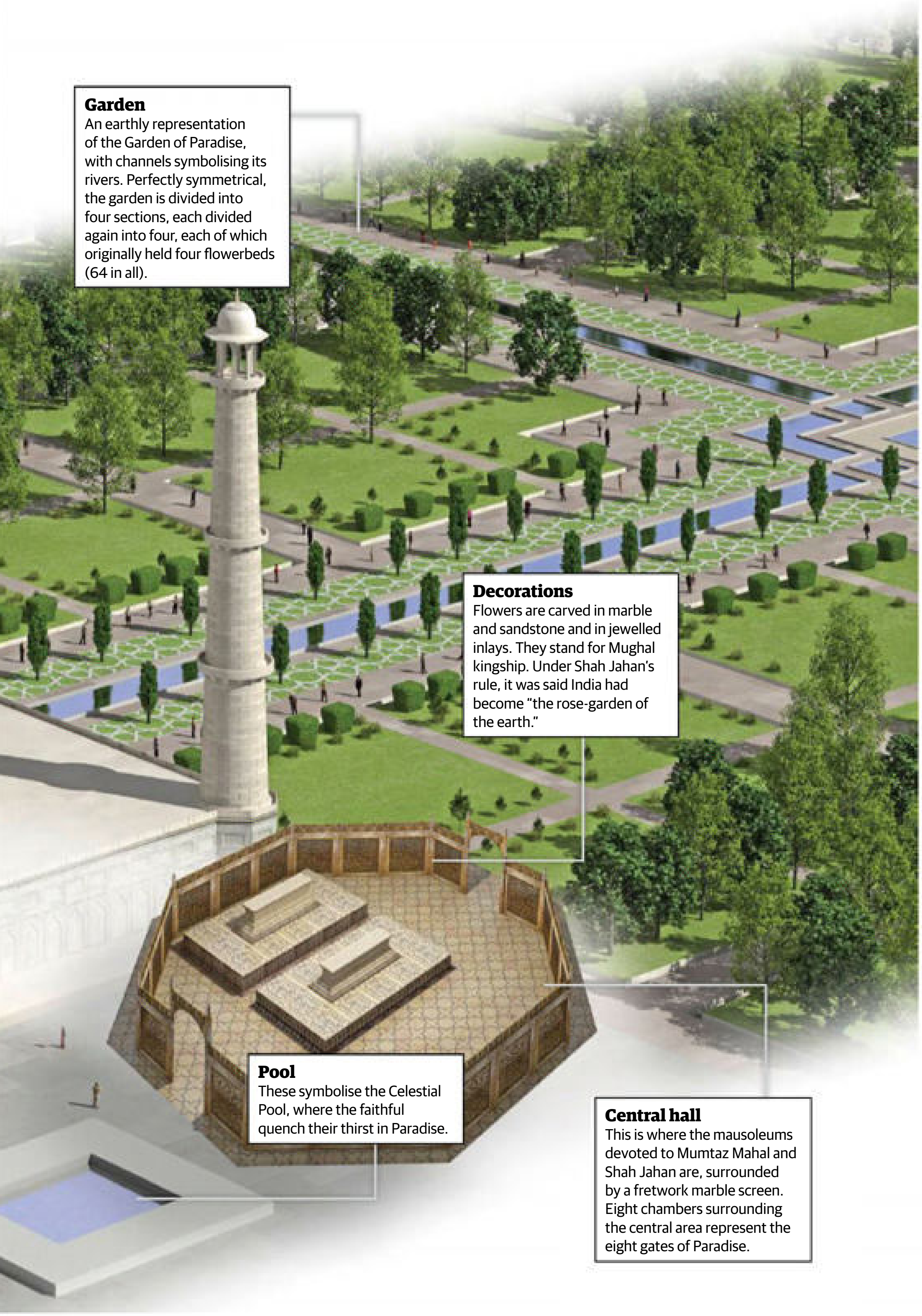
Marble
The white colour symbolises purity, spirituality and enlightenment, turning the tomb into an earthly representation of Mumtaz's heavenly home.

riverbank. How to keep it safe from floods? How to prevent the bank being eroded by fast currents? The answers were both original and brilliant. Shafts were dug down to the bedrock and filled with rammed rubble and lime to create piles linked by arches, forming foundations that would hold the Taj above the highest flood water. A similar set of piles and walls of masonry secured the riverfront.

Now for the building itself. The double-layered walls were to be of brick faced with white marble. A third shell of brickwork would act as scaffolding. An estimated 20,000 workers, although no accurate figures exist, baked and carried bricks, while others brought marble from Makrana, in Rajasthan, 325 kilometres (201 miles) to the west. Marble was a favourite building material of the Mughuls, and Makrana the favoured source. The region's marble was also favoured by many others then and since: the US White House is made of Makrana marble. An eyewitness described seeing blocks of marble "of such unusual size and length that they drew the sweat of many powerful oxen and fierce-looking, big-horned buffalos dragging enormous, strongly made wagons in teams of 20 or 30 animals."

As well as being carved into bas-reliefs, the marble was inlaid with 28 kinds of precious stones, many of which had to be bought abroad. Jasper, garnets and diamonds came from India, but the inlays also included carnelian from Iraq, turquoise from Tibet, agate from Yemen, coral from the Red Sea, and onyx and amethyst from Persia.

For years the results of all this work was visible only to the workers, because the whole building was concealed by brick scaffolding. In 1648, after 16 years of work, the mausoleum was ready. The outer shell of bricks was taken away by the public after



Garden
An earthly representation of the Garden of Paradise, with channels symbolising its rivers. Perfectly symmetrical, the garden is divided into four sections, each divided again into four, each of which originally held four flowerbeds (64 in all).

Decorations
Flowers are carved in marble and sandstone and in jewelled inlays. They stand for Mughal kingship. Under Shah Jahan's rule, it was said India had become "the rose-garden of the earth."

Pool
These symbolise the Celestial Pool, where the faithful quench their thirst in Paradise.

Central hall
This is where the mausoleums devoted to Mumtaz Mahal and Shah Jahan are, surrounded by a fretwork marble screen. Eight chambers surrounding the central area represent the eight gates of Paradise.

Shah Jahan decreed that the people could keep any bricks they removed. Their work revealed the glistening building.

The whole complex was finished in 1654 after 22 years of work, and became a focal point for pilgrims and annual celebrations. The central room was used as a 'festal hall' for Shah Jahan and his friends, making the Taj a combination of tomb, memorial, temple and place of entertainment. Though the tomb was at first visited only by Shah Jahan and his court, it was soon acknowledged as one of the greatest pieces of architecture in the world.

In later Mughal times, the Taj Mahal was dubbed the 'Illumined Tomb', a title that it shares with the Prophet Muhammad's tomb in Medina. As the historian John Roberts puts it in his book *History Of The World*, "it is the only possible rival to the mosque of Cordoba for the title of the most beautiful building in the world." Millions of visitors annually would agree.

From afar, the sight is a magical, ever-changing interplay of river, sky, sunlight and moonlight on the varied shapes and textures. From the end of the garden, with the Taj reflected in the central canal,

THE TAJ MAHAL IN NUMBERS

1,000 elephants were used to transport building materials

20,000 workers from across northern India

28 types of precious and semi-precious stone were used

5,000,000 people visit each year

The dome weighs **12,000** TONS

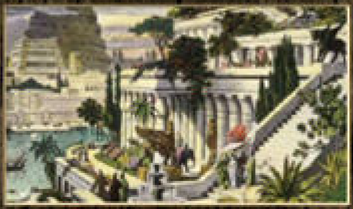
22 years to build

THE MOST ROMANTIC GESTURES EVER

MARILYN MONROE

Joe DiMaggio's flowers for Marilyn

Baseball player Joe DiMaggio and actress Marilyn Monroe were only married for 274 days, but DiMaggio remained infatuated with her for the rest of his life. After her death, he sent red roses to her grave three times a week for 20 years.

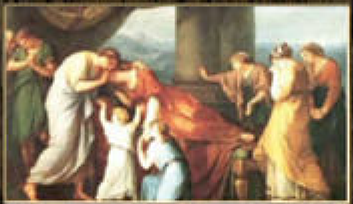


Gardens for a queen

One of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon were said to have been built by King Nebuchadnezzar II for his wife, Amytis, because she missed the green hills of her homeland, Media, in north-western Iran.

A throne given up for love

In 1936, King Edward VIII found he could not marry American heiress Wallis Simpson, because she was a divorcee. Rather than face life as king without her, he abdicated. Countless women admired Edward for the gesture. Leading figures thought him weak. The pair moved abroad as social outcasts.



A wifely self-sacrifice

In Greek legend, Alceste (or Alcestis) killed her father then fled from her brother, Acastus, finding safety by marrying Admetus. Acastus captured Admetus and condemned him to death. Alceste offered to take his place and was sacrificed, thus appeasing the shades of her father.

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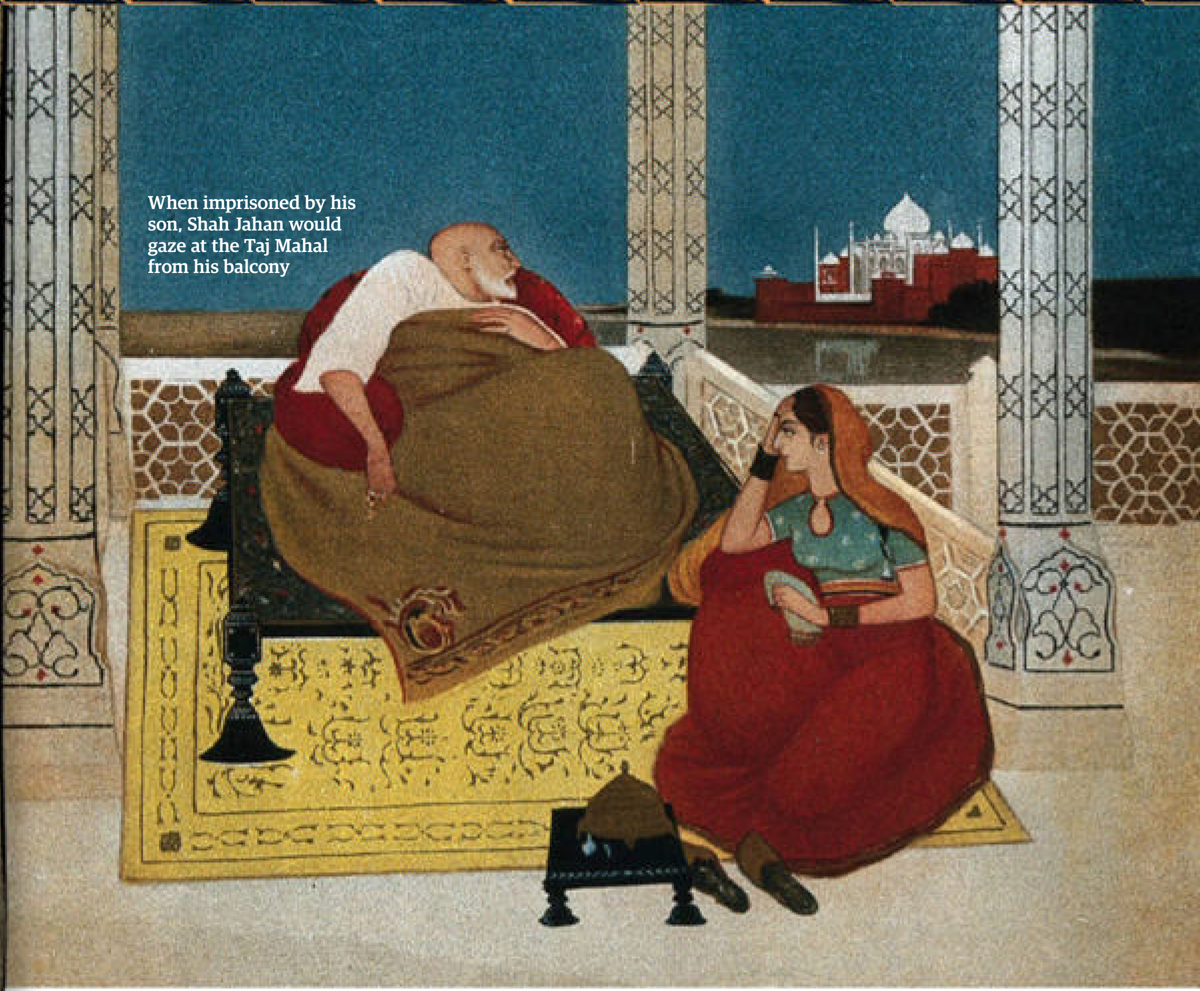

When imprisoned by his son, Shah Jahan would gaze at the Taj Mahal from his balcony

it seems to float free of its foundations. Countless writers have struggled to find words to describe the sight - aloof, inviolable, dream-like, and ethereal are all well-used adjectives - and found that only metaphors serve to evoke what one poet called “a poem in stone, a tear-drop on the cheek of time.”

But there was much more to the complex than the mausoleum: a mosque, lodgings for pilgrims, a place where the poor could receive alms, a bazaar (now mostly destroyed or covered with later buildings), a main gateway of sandstone and the garden, which was designed as a stylised version of the Garden of Eden and continues as the so-called Moonlight Garden on the other side of the river. A huge rectangle of some 580 by 300 metres, the main garden has four equal parts, each divided into four ‘parterres’. Though lawns were laid in the 19th century, originally the open spaces were crammed with flower-beds - narcissi, crocuses, irises, tulips, jasmines, lilacs - and fruit trees, which were harvested to help pay the wages of the caretakers.

The cost of the Taj and its surroundings was immense and ruinous, especially when added to the cost of Shah Jahan's household expenses, his campaigns, his creation of a new capital Shahjahanabad (now Delhi) and an unrivalled programme of building, which included 36 palaces and garden residences, of which 24 survive in part or in whole today. Tax gatherers became rapacious, taking from peasants up to half of their income. Thousands fled from the land and banditry spread.

Perhaps the greatest damage to the Mughal dynasty was done by Shah Jahan's third son, Aurangzeb. In 1658, Shah Jahan fell ill. His son declared himself emperor and soon displayed a disastrous combination of power, paranoia and religiosity that set the whole empire at risk. He imprisoned his father in Agra's fort and set about trying to eradicate Hinduism, sparking violent opposition. Locked in the fort, his ailing father could see the Taj Mahal from a marble balcony on one of the towers. Despite recovering, he was forced to remain there until his death in 1666.

> “THE SIGHT IS A MAGICAL, EVER-CHANGING INTERPLAY OF RIVER, SKY, SUNLIGHT AND MOONLIGHT”

His empire started a long, slow and steady, decline, torn by struggles over the succession and foreign wars, against neighbours and then against India's future conquerors, the British. But his greatest creation remained as a monument to his genius. He was buried next to the love of his life in the chamber beneath the central hall, with a cenotaph on view above. On it runs an inlaid inscription hinting that the Taj was not to be considered as all his own work:

The builder could not have been of this earth, For it is evident that the design was given him by Heaven.

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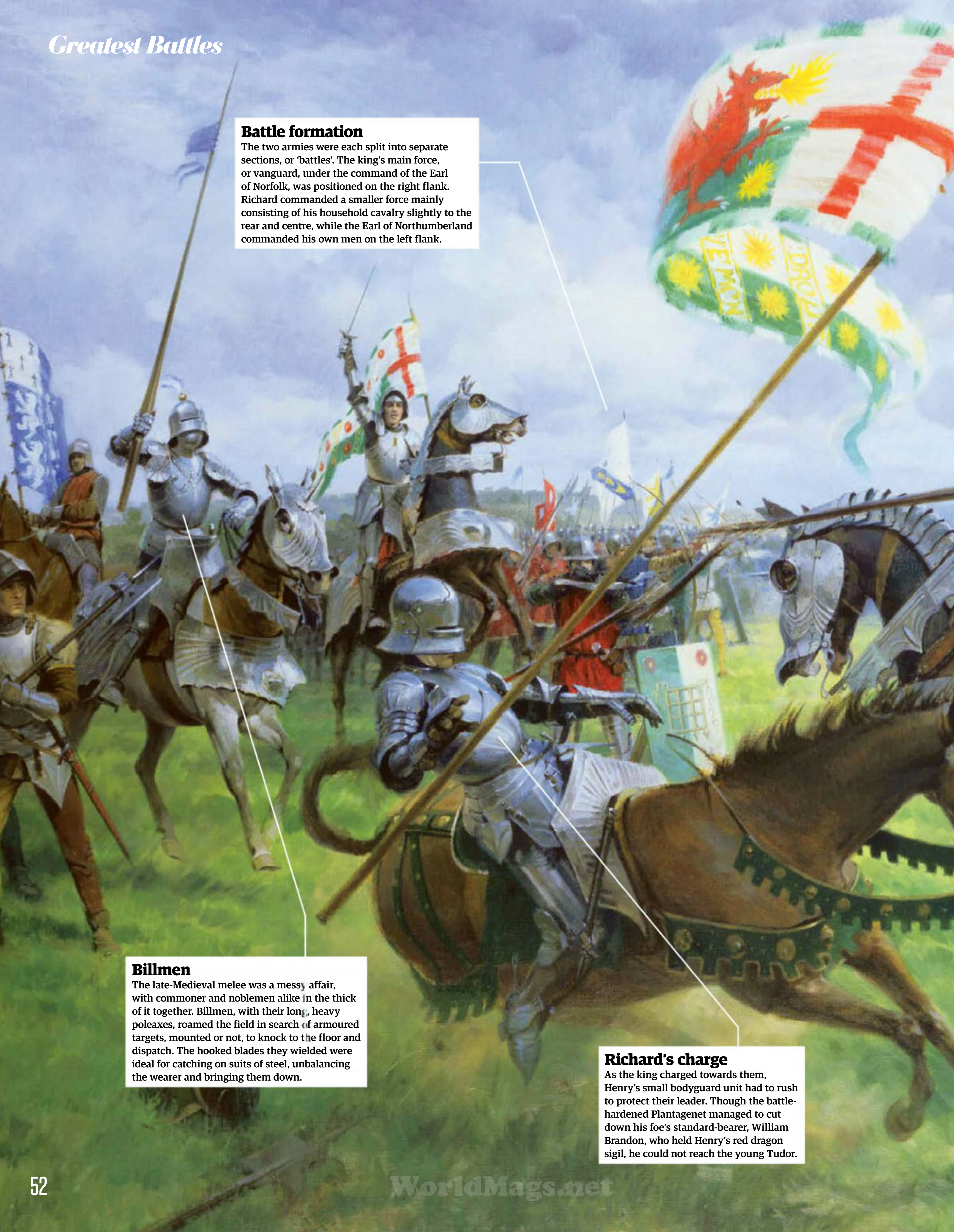


Battle formation

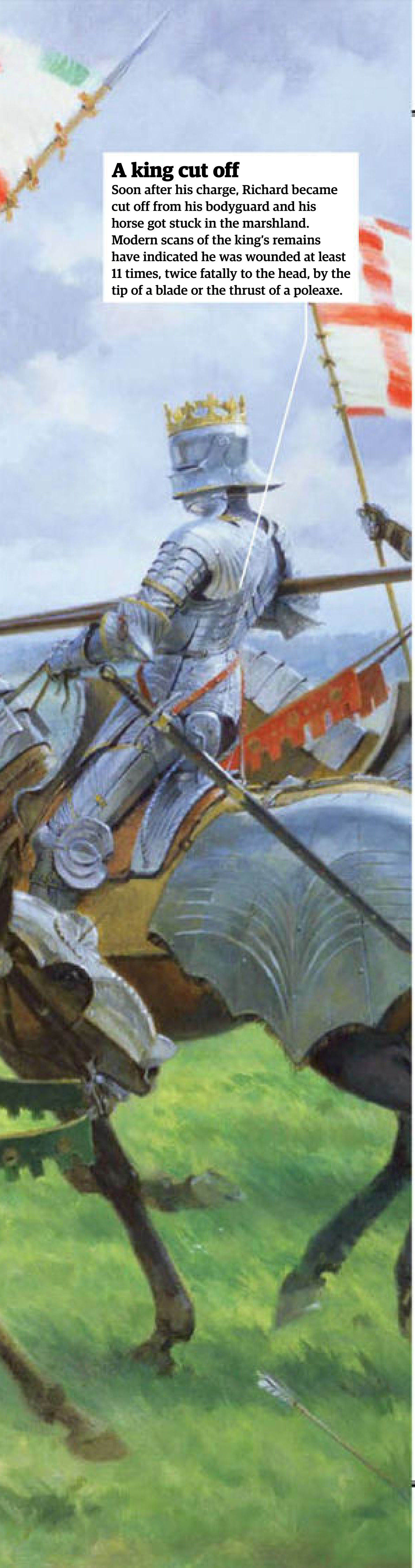
The two armies were each split into separate sections, or 'battles'. The king's main force, or vanguard, under the command of the Earl of Norfolk, was positioned on the right flank. Richard commanded a smaller force mainly consisting of his household cavalry slightly to the rear and centre, while the Earl of Northumberland commanded his own men on the left flank.

Billmen

The late-Medieval melee was a messy affair, with commoner and noblemen alike in the thick of it together. Billmen, with their long, heavy poleaxes, roamed the field in search of armoured targets, mounted or not, to knock to the floor and dispatch. The hooked blades they wielded were ideal for catching on suits of steel, unbalancing the wearer and bringing them down.

Richard's charge

As the king charged towards them, Henry's small bodyguard unit had to rush to protect their leader. Though the battle-hardened Plantagenet managed to cut down his foe's standard-bearer, William Brandon, who held Henry's red dragon sigil, he could not reach the young Tudor.



A king cut off
Soon after his charge, Richard became cut off from his bodyguard and his horse got stuck in the marshland. Modern scans of the king's remains have indicated he was wounded at least 11 times, twice fatally to the head, by the tip of a blade or the thrust of a poleaxe.

GREATEST BATTLES

BOSWORTH

SUTTON CHENEY, LEICESTERSHIRE 22 AUGUST 1485

On a sunny morning in a field in the north of England, the future of the British Isles would be decided forever with the blood of a thousand or more English, Welsh and French lives. Casting his eye over the scene and the force come to meet him, Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, could see the standard of his rival fluttering in the wind - the white boar of Richard Plantagenet, one of the last remaining sons of York. He stood not just between him and the route to London but, crucially, the English throne. Peering purposefully across the divide separating the two armies, Richard in turn was able to spot Henry's standard - the red dragon of Wales. If he could win the day, he would secure his legitimacy as king and send a message to any other pretenders and traitors.

The hatred between Richard's family and their rival for the crown of England, the House of Lancaster, had been raging on and off the battlefield for decades in the bitter civil struggles known as the Cousins' War. Horrific slaughter had torn the country in two, but had not resulted in a lasting peace or a decisive end to the struggle. The Wars of the Roses, as we know them today, would come to a final end on the field of Bosworth.

After the death of Richard's brother, the Yorkist king Edward IV, and then the untimely and mysterious passing of his nephew Edward V, the political cogs of the English nobility sprung into action again after some 12 years of relative peace. Many objected to Richard taking the throne for himself in 1483, and numerous nobles began to question their own loyalty to the crown.

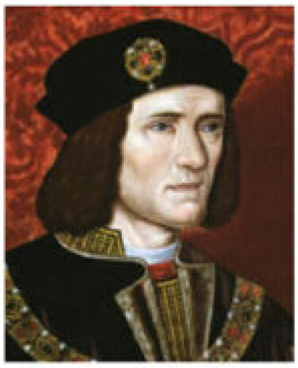
The Lancastrian would-be heir to the throne, Henry Tudor, had sat exiled in France under the protection of Francis II, Duke of Brittany, for years, waiting for his chance to strike. After Richard took the throne for himself, the young pretender crossed from France and landed in his native Wales in a bid to drum up substantial support for his claim. He then marched east into England with an army of a few English knights, a host of Welsh fighters sympathetic to his cause and close to 2,000 French mercenaries. However, King Richard would still be able to call upon far more noble houses and their levies to line up against him.

Richard chose to camp close to Ambion hill near to Bosworth Field, more than 100 miles from London, to cut off Henry's advance towards the capital as well as to give him a commanding view of the southern approach. Henry's force had spent the night further to the south west, at White Moors. Much of the strategic decisions, as well as direct control of the army, was given to the Duke of Oxford, one of Henry's allies and a fierce enemy of the Yorkists.

A third force, which would be capable of tipping the coming clash in either man's favour, was under the command of the Stanley brothers. Seemingly staunch supporters of Richard's cause even before he took the throne, both Sir William and Lord Thomas Stanley had been rewarded handsomely for their loyalty to the crown. On the day of the battle, the Stanley brothers had arrived each with a contingent of men, and each with a mind to choose the battle's victor for himself.

Richard's army

TROOPS 10-15,000



KING RICHARD III

LEADER

The Plantagenet king of England was determined to keep his throne at any cost.

Strengths Richard was the veteran of several battles and an experienced fighter.

Weakness His willingness to embroil himself in the fight often placed him in danger.

HEAVY CAVALRY

KEY UNIT

The armoured killing machines bent on glory.

Strengths Incredibly effective against infantry.

Weakness Easy to bring down if caught static and surrounded.

ARTILLERY

KEY WEAPON

A new and deadly addition to the 15th-century battlefield.

Strengths Intimidating, loud and terrifying to come face to face with.

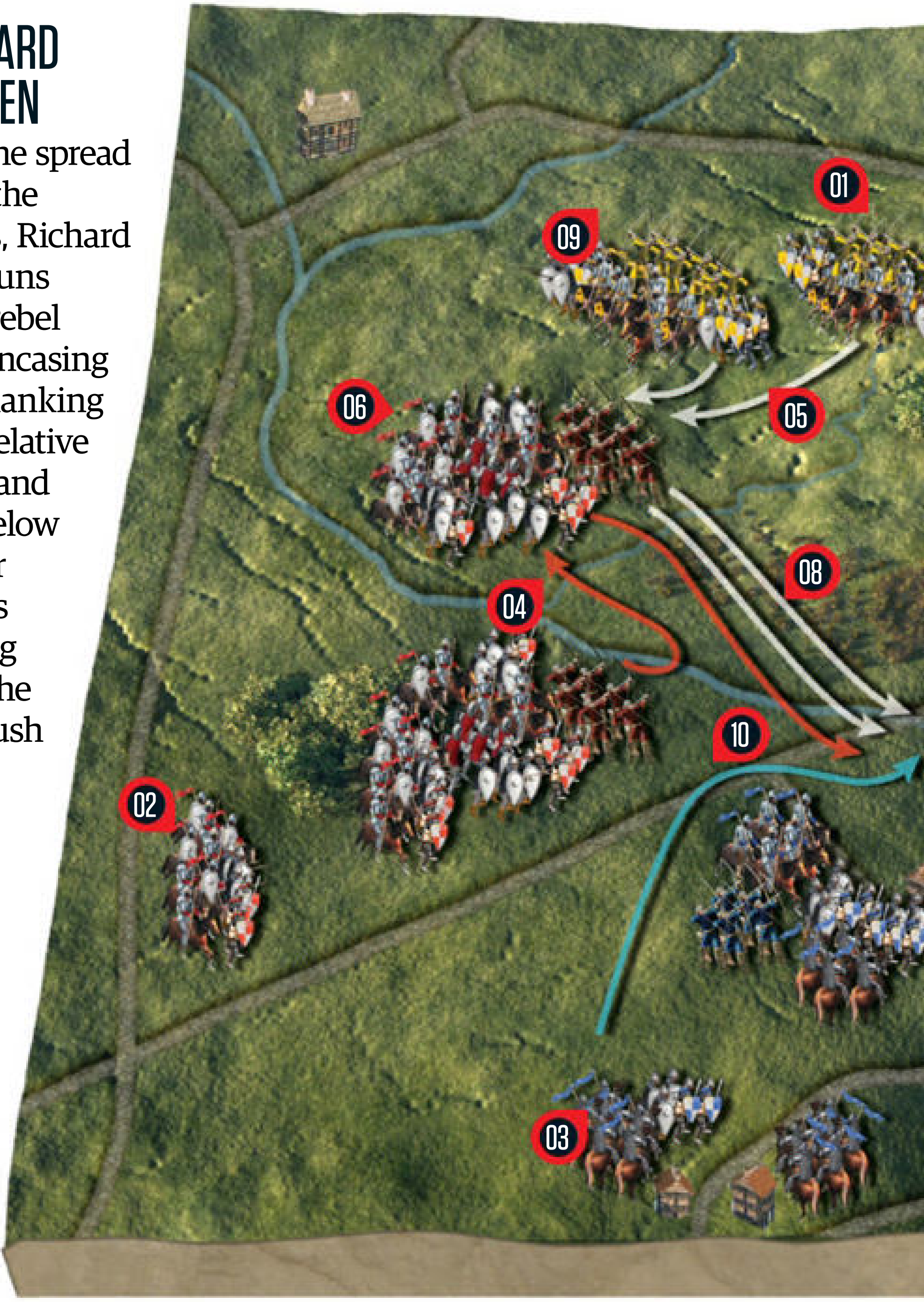
Weakness Often inaccurate and prone to misfires.

01 KING RICHARD DEPLOYS HIS MEN

With his battle line spread wide to envelop the advancing troops, Richard aims to use his guns to soften up the rebel infantry, before encasing them in a swift flanking move. With the relative safety of the hill and the marshland below poised to hamper the enemy horses and men, the king is confident that he will be able to crush the enemy.

02 Henry approaches

Marching from his camp to the south-west of Richard's position, Oxford and Henry lead the army along the Roman road, before they come under fire from the king's artillery just 1,000 yards from Richard's position. The Stanley brothers' forces are some way off still, approaching further south-east from their camp.



03 THE STANLEY BROTHERS WAIT

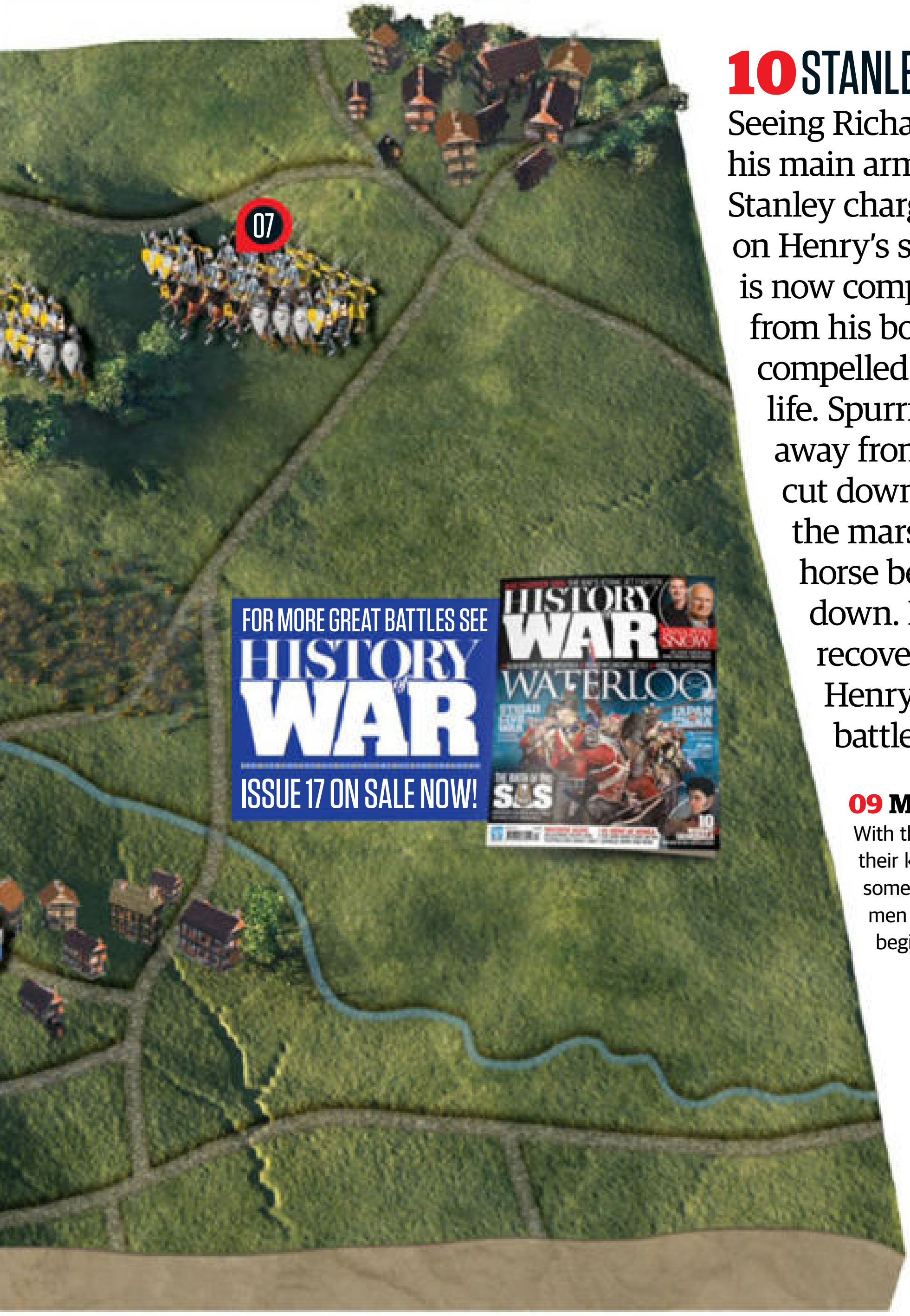
Spotting the battle about to begin, both Stanleys bring their forces to a halt and wait to see which side will gain the upper hand.

04 Oxford manoeuvres

With Richard's battle line up on the hill now revealed to him, Oxford decides to wheel his men back and around the marshland, moving towards Richard's vanguard on his right flank. This is the battle group commanded by the Duke of Norfolk, a close ally of the king's. Seeing this move, Richard sends his order for Norfolk to attack down the hill at the rebels.

05 The battle begins

Charging down from its advantage on the hill, Norfolk's vanguard initially causes Oxford's advancing troops to falter. The rebel force soon gathers itself into a wedge formation, banding together to weather the onslaught from the king's archers and knights. Henry remains with his small bodyguard force, to the rear of the fighting, to remain relatively protected from the thick of the melee.



FOR MORE GREAT BATTLES SEE HISTORY of WAR
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06 NORFOLK IS SLAIN

With his helmet smashed away by the Earl of Oxford in fierce combat, the Duke of Norfolk is fatally wounded by an arrow. News of his death spreads quickly and disheartens the Yorkist force, as well as the king, the duke's patron.

07 Northumberland hesitates

Whether through treachery or a breakdown in communication, the Earl of Northumberland fails to respond to Richard's command for his men to join the fight. Though his position on the far left of the king's line could have prevented him from manoeuvring successfully, the earl's hesitation to commit to battle is likely through uncertainty over which side to back.

08 Richard charges

Spotting Henry's standard behind his lines, moving towards the Stanley forces, the king sees an opportunity to kill his enemy and end the battle quickly. He charges with his household cavalry, taking Henry's standard-bearer by surprise and killing him outright. However, the young usurper's bodyguards swiftly move between Richard and their lord, keeping him from harm. Richard and his men fight hard to reach Henry, but they become locked in combat with the guards.

09 Melee on the hill

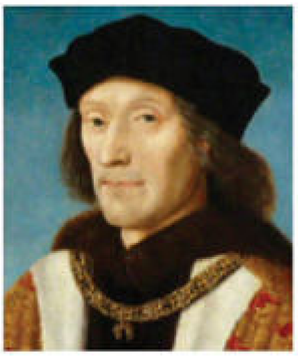
With their commander dead and their king out of sight, fighting somewhere in the thick of it, the men of the Yorkist vanguard begin to waver.

10 STANLEY COMMITS

Seeing Richard isolated from his main army, William Stanley charges his force in on Henry's side. The king is now completely cut off from his bodyguard and is compelled to fight for his life. Spurring on his horse away from the fray, he is cut down and killed in the marshland after his horse becomes bogged down. His crown is then recovered and given to Henry Tudor after the battle ends.

Henry's army

TROOPS 10-13,000



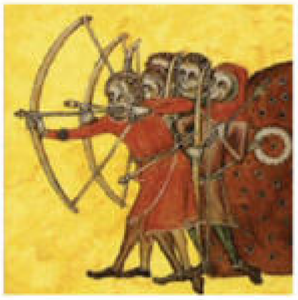
HENRY TUDOR

LEADER

The young Welsh pretender was back to force his claim to the throne.

Strengths A good claim, with a host of strong supporters.

Weakness Little to no experience of combat.



ARCHERS

KEY UNIT

Raining down death from above with lethal efficiency.

Strengths Excellent range and extremely powerful.

Weakness Much less competent when in close combat.

BILLHOOK

KEY WEAPON

The infantry were very skilled at taking down any armoured foes with this poleaxe.

Strengths Ideal for attacking mounted knights.

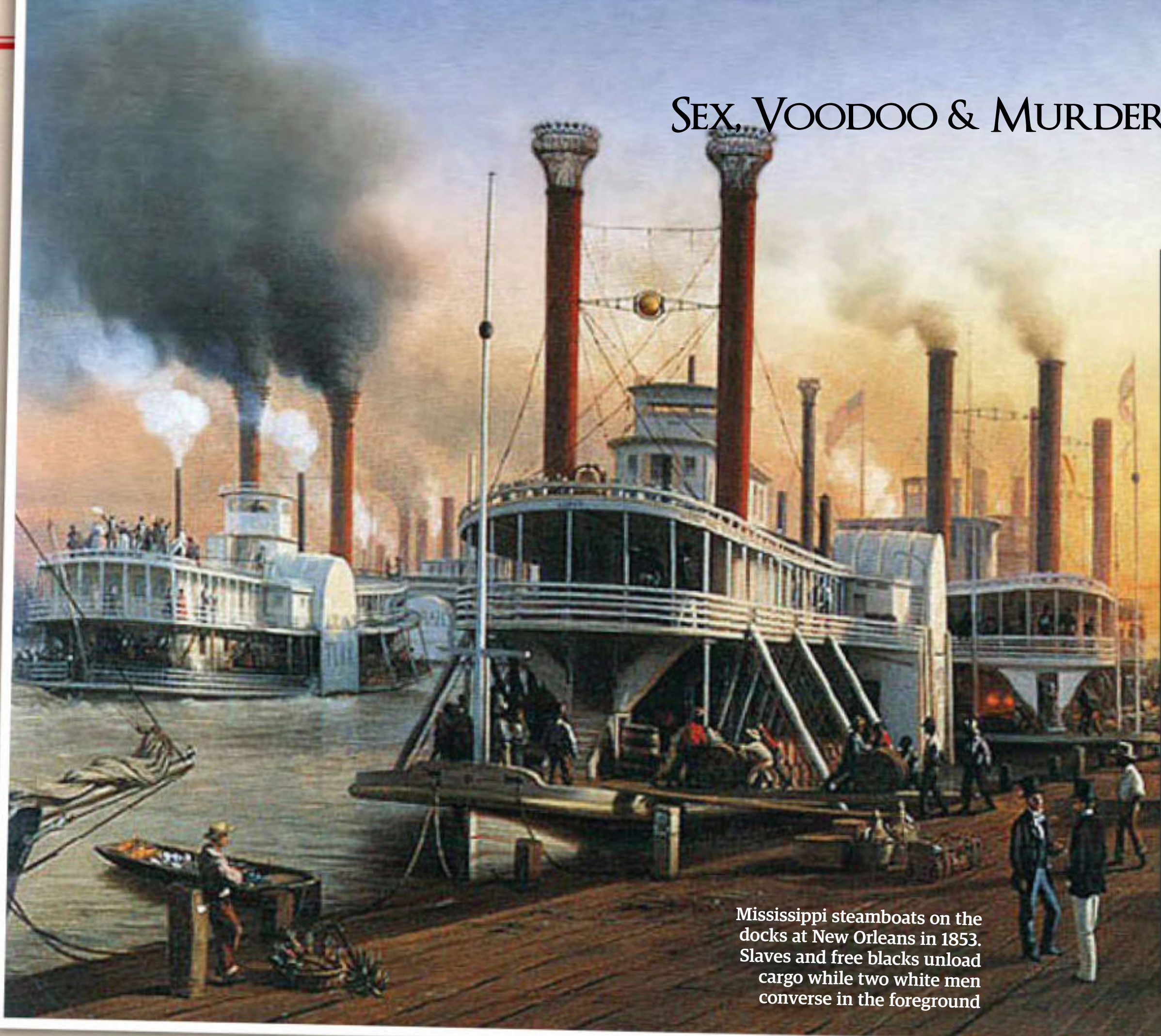
Weakness Large and unwieldy in close quarters.

© Graham Turner

Sex VOODOO & MURDER in NEW ORLEANS

19th-century New Orleans was troubled, squalid and beautiful. It was a city of many races and languages, but it was riven by racial division, political corruption and gang violence

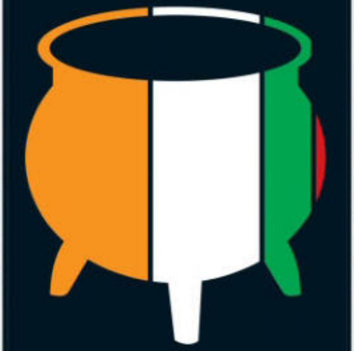
Written by Dominic Green



Mississippi steamboats on the docks at New Orleans in 1853. Slaves and free blacks unload cargo while two white men converse in the foreground

THE NEW ORLEANS MELTING POT

With immigration from Europe, black slaves were replaced by Irish, German and Italian labourers as New Orleans' working class. The ethnic composition of New Orleans in 1850 was:



FOREIGN-BORN 42.8%

WHITES 36.8%

ENSLAVED BLACKS 15.1%

FREE BLACKS 5.3%

Nestled in the swamps where the Mississippi River meets the Gulf of Mexico, New Orleans was established by the French, rebuilt by the Spanish, regained by the French and then, in 1803, sold to the United States. A crossroads of languages and cultures, the city grew rich on cotton, sugar and the slaves who were traded in its markets and laboured on plantations. The Big Easy was always an exception: more European, more African, and, like the gumbo stew and jazz that made it famous, more mixed than any other city in the USA.

Through the 1800s, waves of immigrants swelled New Orleans' population. Each tide changed the city's demographic balance and challenged its political leaders. In 1803, New Orleans was a French-speaking city of 8,000, with a substantial Creole (mixed-race) minority. By 1810, following an influx of fugitives from the Haitian Revolution, two-thirds of the city's population were black. But soon, the end of the Atlantic slave trade and the rise of immigration from Europe transformed New Orleans into a white-majority city, and the capital of the south's slave economy. Between 1830 and 1860, immigrants from Ireland, Germany and Italy quadrupled the population to more than 170,000. When the civil war broke out in 1861, per capita income was the second highest in the country and the highest in the south. Only Boston and New York had busier ports.

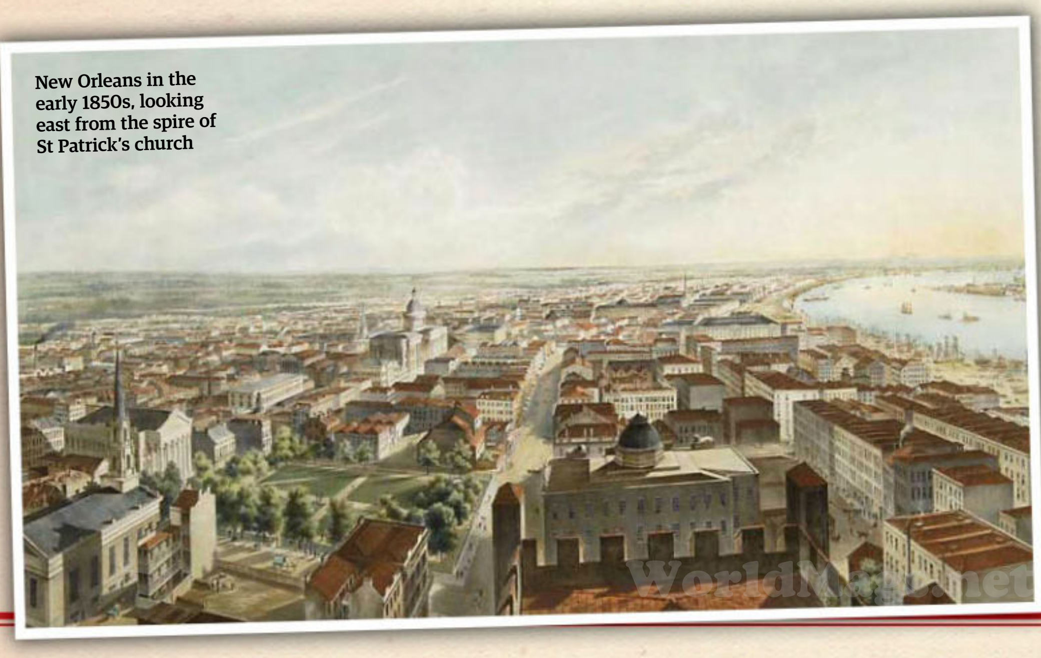
After the civil war, PBS Pinchback became the first mixed-race governor of an American state. For a while, New Orleans had an integrated school system too. But white resentment of black enfranchisement and the economic troubles that followed the war led to anti-black riots. In the 1870s, the hope of Reconstruction gave way to Jim Crow. State and city legislation segregated schools and public life, and white mobs prevented black people from voting.

Yet New Orleans remained socially and racially mixed, a unique combination of races and immigrants. Ever more relaxed in morals than the Protestant US, after the civil war New Orleans became notorious as the 'Sodom of the South': a city of police corruption, turf wars between Italian gangs fighting for control of the port, and 'concert saloons' – where rich whites cavorted with black prostitutes to the licentious sound of 'coon music'.

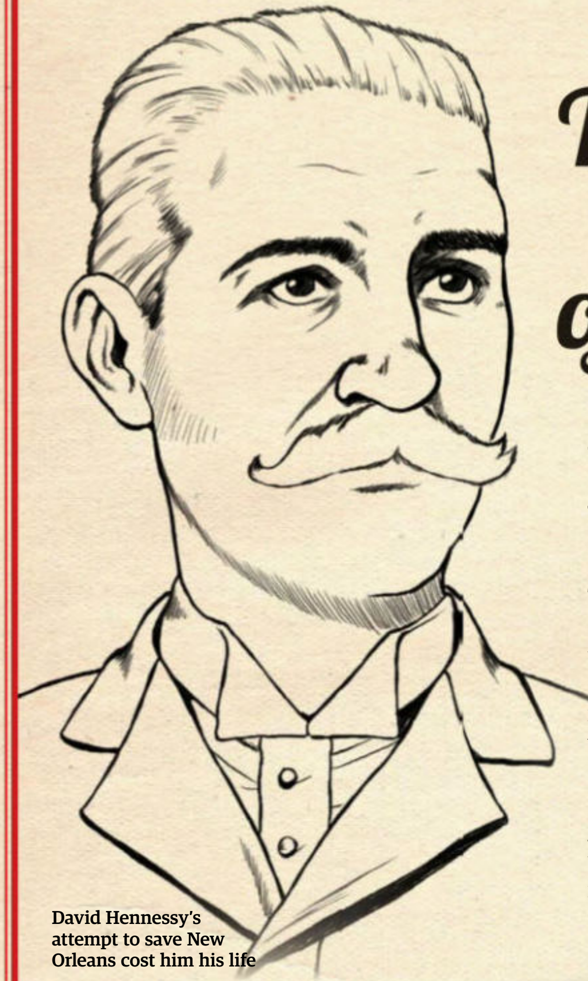
By the 1880s, gambling, prostitution, organised crime and racially mixed dancehalls and brothels had spilled out of their traditional quarters 'back of town' and threatened to take over the city.

New Orleans, it was said, was the first American city to build an opera house and the last to lay a modern sewer system. While other cities electrified their street lighting, New Orleans continued with gas lamps. Rates of murder and burglary rose, and brothels and speakeasies multiplied. As the Reverend J Chandler Gregg rued: "It is no easy thing to go to heaven by way of New Orleans."

Many of the city's residents had no interest in getting there. Jazz, the music that came out of New Orleans, was to become the USA's only original art form. The city that produced it, however, became notorious for sex, corruption and lawlessness.



New Orleans in the early 1850s, looking east from the spire of St Patrick's church



David Hennessy's attempt to save New Orleans cost him his life

The ASSASSINATION of DAVID HENNESSY

When the mob families of New Orleans went to war, the police chief promised to clean up the city

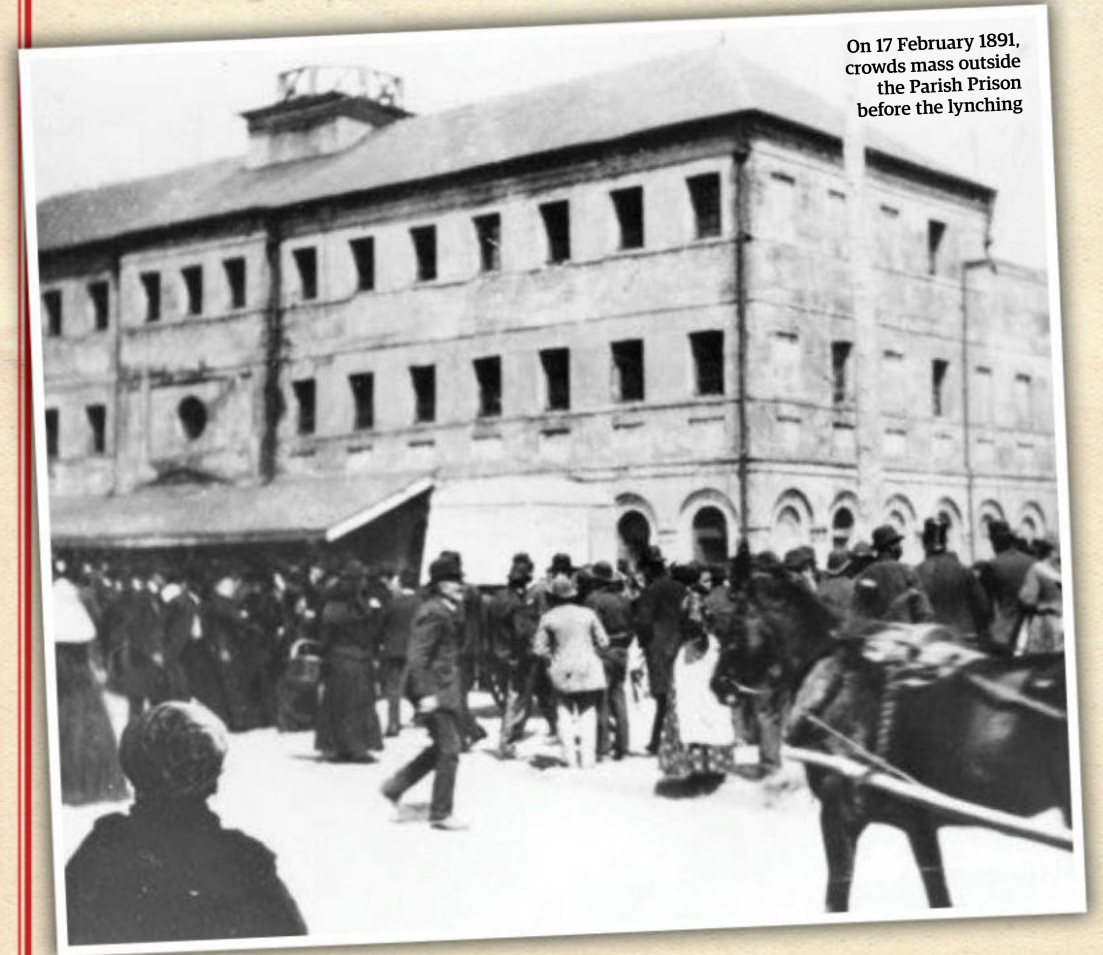
The immigrants from Italy that poured into New Orleans included members of the Camorra, the Neapolitan Mafia, and the Cosa Nostra, the Sicilian Mafia. In the 1880s, the two gangs fought for control of the lucrative port of New Orleans, where South American fruit was unloaded to be shipped all over the USA. Joe and Peter Provenzano controlled the docks, but Carlo 'Charles' Matranga's gang wanted to take over. As their war escalated, the two families brought in as many as 300 Mafiosi from Sicily. In 1888, Joseph Shakspeare, the mayor of New Orleans, ordered police commissioner David Hennessy to restore order and keep the peace.

Hennessy, an Irish-American milk-drinker who lived with his mother and prayed every evening, summoned the heads of the Provenzano and Matranga families to a meeting at the Red Light Club on Customhouse Street. There, he told them the city would no longer tolerate mob violence.

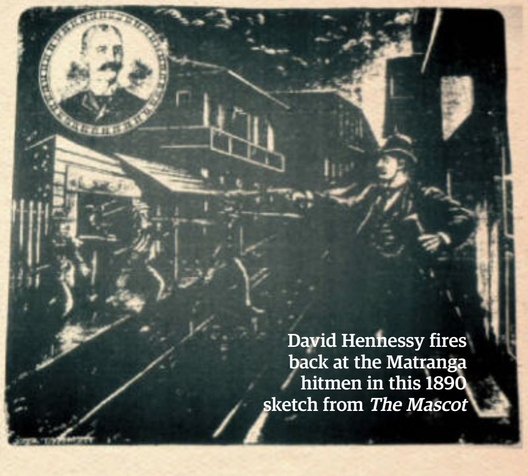
For two years, the families complied. But in April 1890, the Provenzanos ambushed a wagonload of Matrangas as they returned from the docks. Several were injured; Antonio 'Tony' Matranga, Carlo's brother, was killed. The incident became known as the 'Midnight Vendetta' - the first American use of 'vendetta' to describe a Mafia feud.

At trial, six Provenzano members were convicted. But Hennessy was not satisfied. Believing that the Matrangas had perjured themselves in their testimonies, he dug deeper into their business. He contacted the police in Rome and discovered evidence of Matranga links to organised crime there. Hennessy decided to target the Matranga family and allied with the Provenzanos in order to secure the testimonies he needed. His new evidence convinced a judge to overturn the Provenzanos' convictions and order a retrial. This time, the Matrangas, the victims of the shooting, would be in the dock too.

On a dark, wet evening in May 1890, gunmen attacked Hennessy as he walked home to his mother's house. The police chief emptied his Colt



On 17 February 1891, crowds mass outside the Parish Prison before the lynching



David Hennessy fires back at the Matranga hitmen in this 1890 sketch from *The Mascot*

WHO KILLA DA CHIEF?

The police had suspects and motives, but no evidence and few reliable witnesses. And did the Matranga gang bribe the jury?

CARLO MATRANGA

AGE: 43
OCCUPATION: HEAD OF THE MATRANGA

Wounded in the April 1890 Midnight Vendetta ambush that killed his brother, Carlo Matranga wanted revenge. He refused to accept Hennessy's order to stop the feud. If anyone ordered Hennessy's killing, it was 'Millionaire Charlie', the head of the Matranga family.

VERDICT: NOT TRIED

ANTONIO BAGNETTO

AGE: 41
OCCUPATION: SAILOR

The police named Bagnetto as one of Hennessy's assailants, but he continually denied being a part of it, and the Italian consul vouched for his good character. The jury, some of who had most likely been intimidated or bribed by his associates, could not agree on his role.

VERDICT: ACQUITTED

JOSEPH MACHECA

AGE: 47
OCCUPATION: MERCHANT

Born in New Orleans, Macheca led the first Mafia gang in the New World. Hennessy had learned from the police in Rome about Macheca's Italian connections. In the first trial, Macheca had to stop Hennessy from testifying on behalf of the Provenzanos – and against him.

VERDICT: MISTRIAL

EMANUELE POLIZZI

AGE: 29
OCCUPATION: FRUIT SELLER

A policeman claimed to recognise Polizzi from the murder scene, even though Polizzi had actually been more than a block away and had his back turned to the scene on the night in question. Polizzi was the last of the 19 suspects to be arrested by police.

VERDICT: MISTRIAL

PIERO MONASTERIO

AGE: 40
OCCUPATION: SHOEMAKER

The police arrested and then beat up Monasterio because Hennessy's killers had fired the fatal bullets from the shadows by the side gate of his shack. Did Joseph Macheca rent Monasterio's shack for this purpose? The police had no evidence against the father of five.

VERDICT: MISTRIAL

CHARLES TRAINA

AGE: 38
OCCUPATION: LABOURER

For two years before the assassination, Traina had worked on a plantation outside New Orleans. He came into the city the day before Hennessy was killed and left the day after. Was he a tourist caught up in a mob conspiracy, or a hitman called in from the country?

VERDICT: NOT TRIED

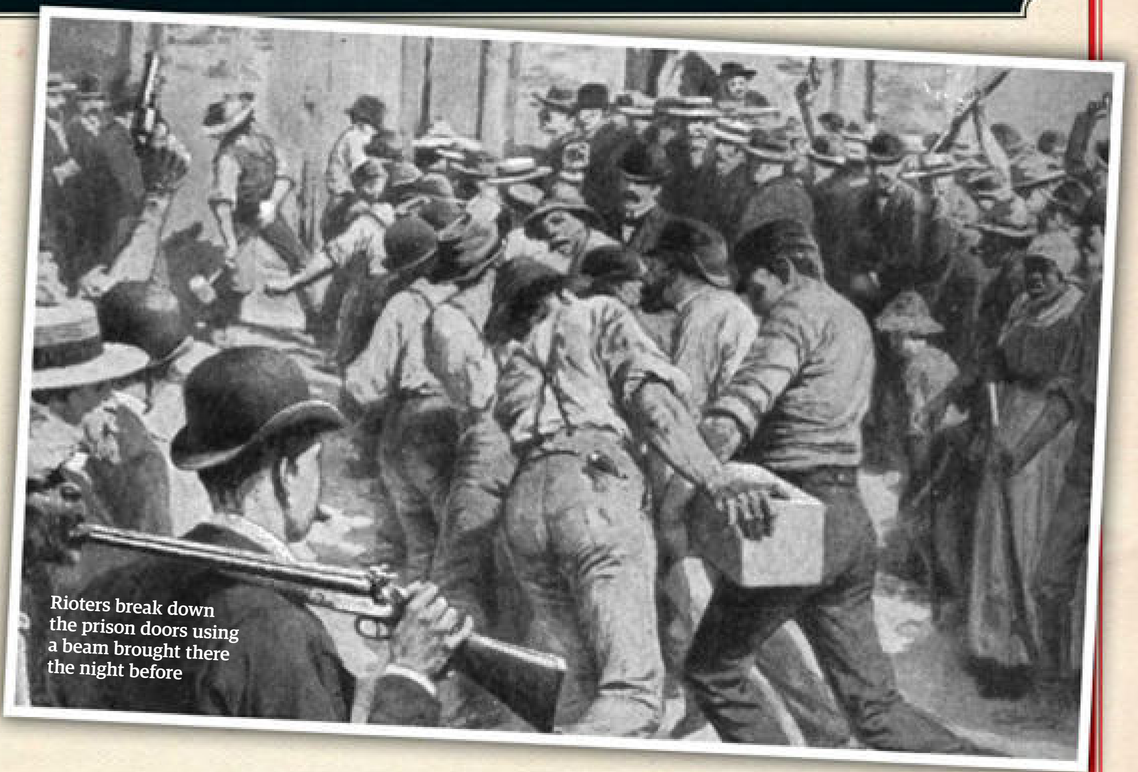
revolver at the figures in the shadows but fell bleeding from shotgun wounds to his face, arms, legs and left side. "These people can't kill me," he boasted from a bed at Charity Hospital, but his doctors discovered an inoperable wound from a bullet that had grazed his heart. As he died, he gasped: "Dagoes."

Amid public outrage over the killing, Mayor Shakspeare formed a Committee of Fifty from the city's leading families. Guided by the group's decisions, the police arrested more than 100 Italians, some of them mobsters, others unlucky bystanders. Five months later, 19 were indicted: nine for the shooting, and ten, including Carlo Matranga and his ally Joseph Macheca, as accessories before the fact.

The trial of the first nine defendants began in February 1891; it turned into a farce. The police had little evidence – their best eyewitness admitted to having been drunk on the night in question. Public animosity was so high that 1,400 citizens had to be sifted to produce the requisite 12 jurors. And then the Matrangas started to pressure the jury.

Dominic O'Malley, a 'private detective' and known Matranga associate, was arrested for offering bribes to the jurors. To add to the disorder, one of the defendants, Emanuele Polizzi, a fruit seller who spoke no English, feigned epileptic fits in court. After six weeks, the jury returned its verdict. Six of the defendants were not guilty, and three should be retried due to procedural failings.

The next day, lawyer William Parkerson rallied a 'Vigilance Committee'. Determined to avenge Hennessy, a "mighty, roaring stream" of vigilantes led by "the most wealthy and respected" citizens marched to the Parish Prison in Treme ward, shouting the mocking chant: "Who killa da chief?"



Rioters break down the prison doors using a beam brought there the night before

Armed with rifles and shotguns, the frenzied mob battered their way into the prison. The warder, hearing the trouble before it arrived, had told the Italian suspects to hide. Some had heeded his warning and taken refuge in the women's wing. After a brief search, the vigilantes found and shot nine of defendants. They hanged two more from a tree outside the jail, including Polizzi the fruit seller. Three of the dead had been acquitted at the trial, the jury had failed to agree on three others and five were from the second group of prisoners who had yet to be tried.

Parkerson claimed that he had been defending "the very root of American institutions." He threatened to burn down the Italian quarter if any of the lynchers were prosecuted. Although the Italian government complained, and received $20,000 in compensation, New Orleans' leaders were not inclined to punish the killers.

Hidden under a mattress, Carlo Matranga survived the lynching and ran the New Orleans Mafia for another three decades. No one was ever convicted of the murder of David Hennessy.

STORYVILLE

Rise of the red light district – perhaps the most racially mixed place in the USA

In 1897, as part of New Orleans' campaign against prostitution, drug dealing and street crime, city alderman Sidney Story suggested that the city should copy the ports in Germany and Holland and designate an area in which prostitution could be practiced without prosecution. This 'district' was to be an area of 38 blocks on the edge of the historic French Quarter in central New Orleans. It soon became known as Storyville.

Businessmen like murdered police chief David Hennessy's friend Tom Anderson invested in bars and brothels there. Within three years, Anderson was the informal 'mayor of Storyville', and the district's bars, brothels and dancehalls were New Orleans' biggest revenue generator.

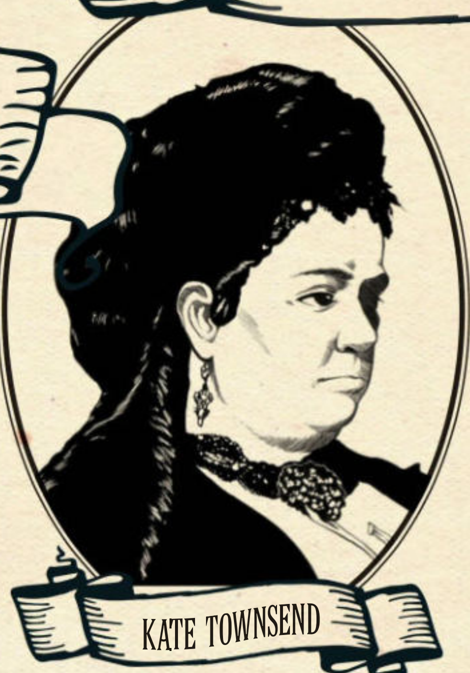
During the winter horse-racing season, gamblers gathered in New Orleans from all over the country. Arriving at the nearby train station, they could purchase the 'Blue Book', a user's guide to Storyville, which rated the brothels and their prostitutes. In the racing season, the district contained as many as 3,000 prostitutes.

Storyville was built in the image of New Orleans' racial and economic divisions. The row of elegant mansions on Basin Street were the fanciest and most expensive brothels in the USA, where a night cost more than $10. But in the slums behind Basin Street, women lived in 'cribs', one-room shacks, and sold themselves for 50 cents. There were black, white and racially mixed 'octoroon' prostitutes in Storyville, but the law forbade black men from hiring them: Storyville was for white men only.

The city council thought they had defeated vice by corralling it in Storyville. Instead, it flourished, protected by the law, mayor Anderson's political connections and lavish bribes paid to the police. Eventually, the federal government closed Storyville in the national interest. In November 1917, as the USA entered World War I, the US Navy convinced the city that its brothels were a bad influence on the troops and sailors stationed nearby.

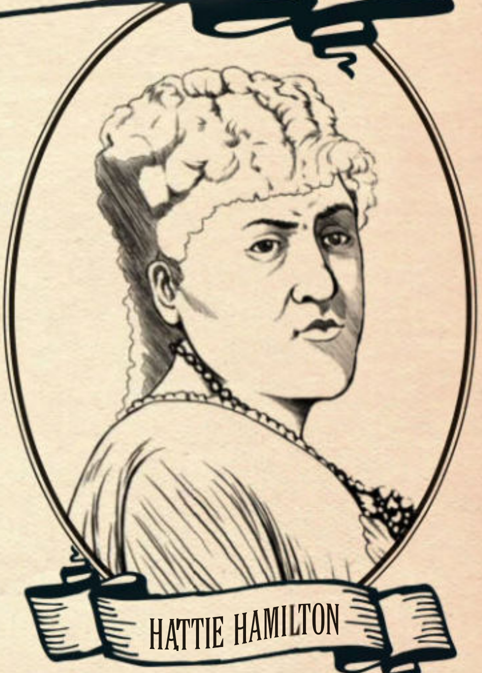
The district faded out in the 1920s. Storyville's shacks and mansions were torn down and today it is the Iberville housing estate. Only a few historic buildings survive from its notorious past.

THE MADAMS OF BASIN STREET


KATE TOWNSEND

The fat madam with two 'fancy men'

In 1866, Kate Townsend built the first of Basin Street's grand 'houses'. Born in England, she had fallen pregnant by a sailor who disappeared after her twins were born. At 18, she emigrated, to New Orleans. After setting up her own house, she lived with a 'fancy man', Treville Egbert Sykes, a member of a respectable family. But, after 25 years together, Kate fell in love with another man named McLern. When Sykes complained about Kate lending her lover money, the pair beat McLern up. Soon afterwards, Kate was heard threatening to "open Sykes' belly" with a butcher's knife. On 3 November 1883, screams were heard from Kate's room. Sykes had killed her, stabbing her 11 times. Tried for murder, Sykes claimed Kate had attacked him, first with a knife and then with pruning shears. Acquitted, Sykes inherited her estate.

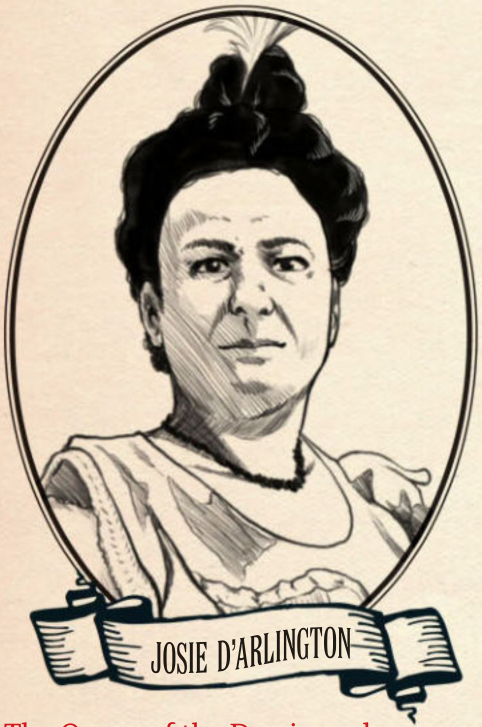

HATTIE HAMILTON

The Basin Street belle

A shopkeeper's daughter from New York, Hattie Hamilton came to New Orleans by way of Cuba, where her husband had been surprised to find her name on a list of prostitutes. He followed her to New Orleans and enlisted as a policeman; he even arrested his ex-wife for brawling with other prostitutes. After several years with a gambler known as 'The Colonel', Hattie caught the eye of Senator Beares. He set her up in business at 21 Basin Street. Soon, Hattie's brothel was drawing politicians and businessmen away from her rival, Kate Townsend. Leaving '21' in her housekeeper's hands, Hattie moved into Beares' mansion. They drank and fought for days at a time. In 1870, Beares was found dying from a pistol wound, with Hattie lolling drunkenly nearby. She was never charged; rumour had it that the Senator's family preferred not to air his secrets in court.

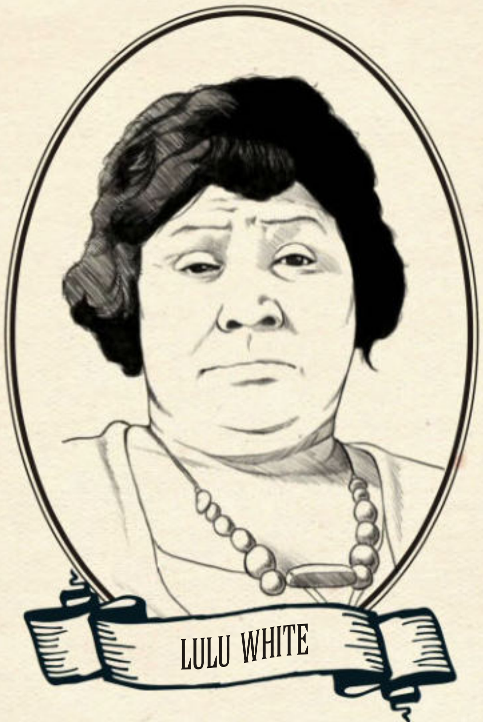
Two prostitutes playing cards and drinking Champagne. Photographer Ernest Bellocq captured the lives of the women of Storyville in the early 1910s

In this Bellocq, a prostitute sips 'Raleigh' Rye, the most popular hard liquor in Storyville



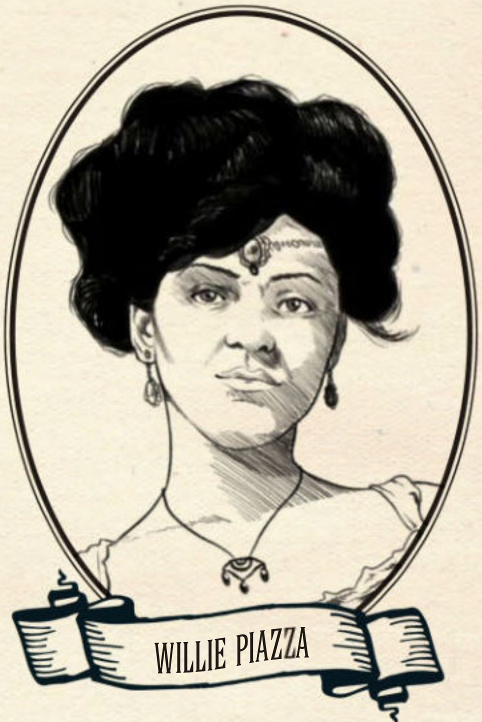
The Queen of the Demimonde

When the Storyville Ordinance was passed, Josie Alton was working in some of the roughest brothels in New Orleans. After her fancy man, Philip Lobrano, murdered her brother, she decided to move upmarket. Changing her name to Josie Lobrano d'Arlington, she partnered with Tom Anderson, the unofficial mayor of Storyville, and opened a lavish four-storey mansion at 225 North Basin Street, with 16 bedrooms, a music room and parlours decorated in Turkish, Japanese, Viennese and American styles. Attracting the cream of New Orleans' political and business society, she organised orgiastic 'circus' shows and engaged 'specialists' who catered to fetishists. The Blue Book, the buyer's guide to Storyville's brothels, praised her house as "the most decorative and costly fitted-out sporting palace in the United States."



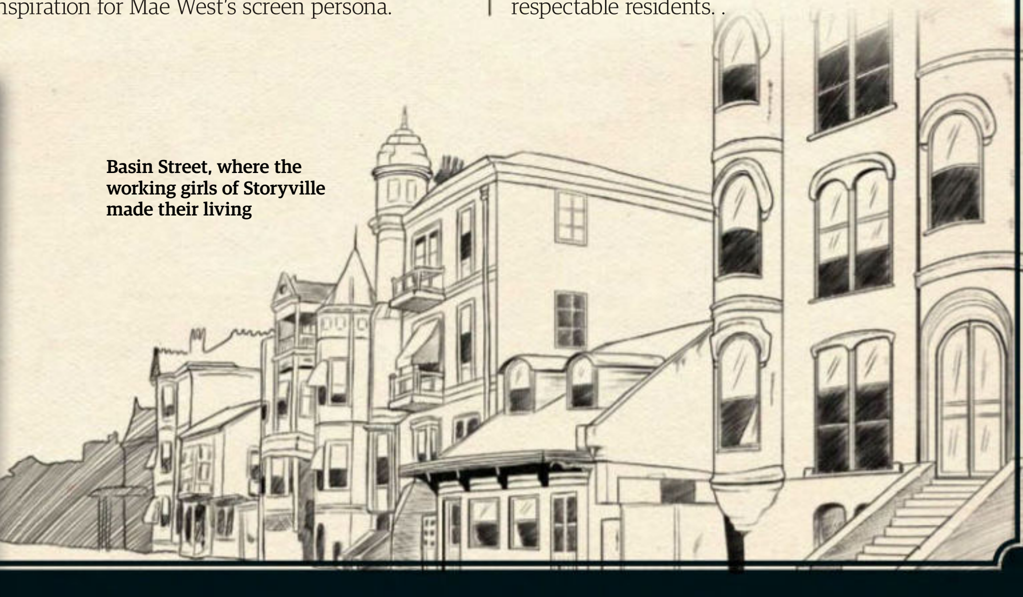
The Octoroon of Mahogany Hall

Two doors down from Josie d'Arlington, Lulu White built a four-storey palace with cut-glass chandeliers, private bathrooms, five parlours – one of them entirely mirrored – and an elevator. Lulu's wealthy patrons, including the 'Democratic ring' that ran New Orleans' politics, were investors and clients; the champagne, Louis Armstrong recalled, flowed "like water." All of her prostitutes were octoroons (light-skinned blacks). Lulu claimed to have been born in Cuba or Jamaica, but she probably came from Alabama. She called herself an octoroon, but was noticeably darker than her girls. She presided over Mahogany Hall in a red wig, an evening gown and an array of diamonds that sparkled like "the lights of the St Louis Exposition." Her flamboyant style has been credited as the inspiration for Mae West's screen persona.

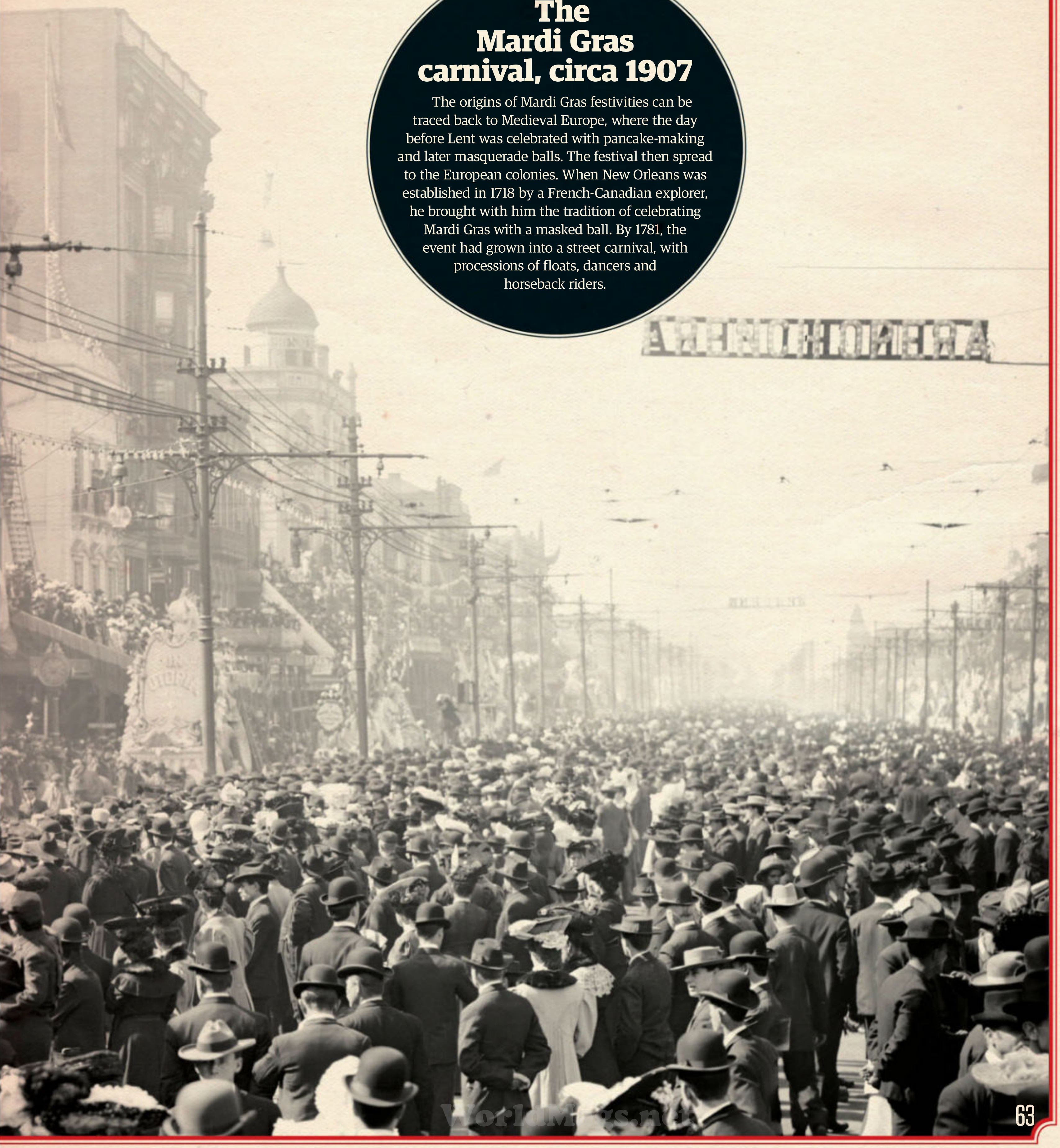


The Countess of Basin Street

Willie Piazza, the Countess of Basin Street, was the daughter of an Italian hotelkeeper who had emigrated into Mississippi and an illiterate woman of colour who may have been a former slave. She spoke several languages, wore a monocle and smoked Russian cigarettes in a long, jewelled holder. She stocked her brothel with an extensive library and a white piano, which she reserved for the best musicians in New Orleans. The countess's customers never asked where she had acquired her education, they were more interested in her girls, who were considered to be the "most handsome and intelligent octoroons in the United States." She dressed her girls so stylishly that the dressmakers of New Orleans would study their outfits then copy them for the city's more respectable residents. .

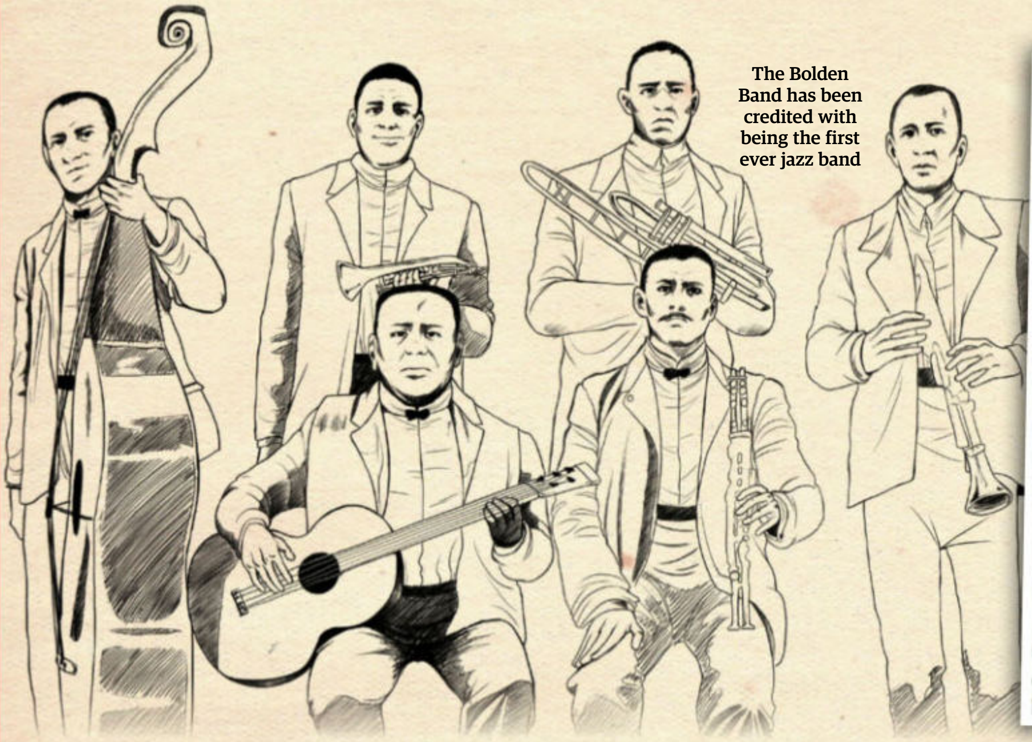


Basin Street, where the working girls of Storyville made their living

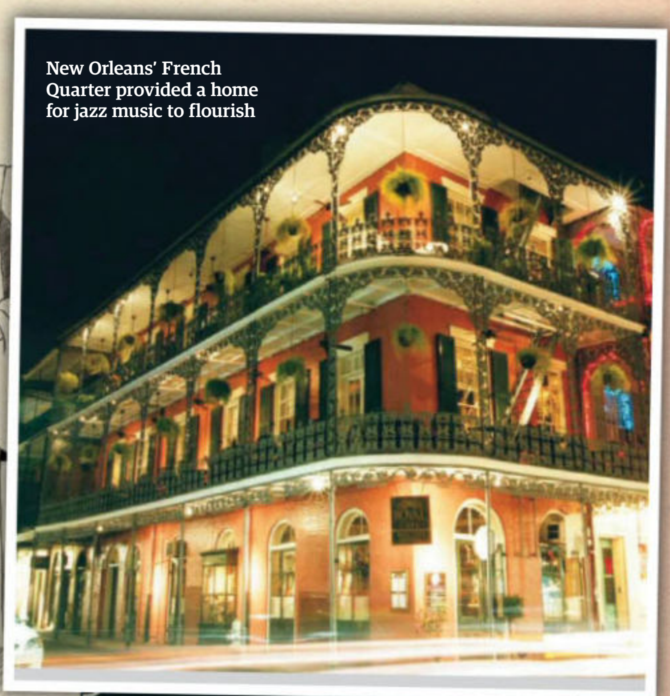


The Mardi Gras carnival, circa 1907

The origins of Mardi Gras festivities can be traced back to Medieval Europe, where the day before Lent was celebrated with pancake-making and later masquerade balls. The festival then spread to the European colonies. When New Orleans was established in 1718 by a French-Canadian explorer, he brought with him the tradition of celebrating Mardi Gras with a masked ball. By 1781, the event had grown into a street carnival, with processions of floats, dancers and horseback riders.



The Bolden Band has been credited with being the first ever jazz band



New Orleans' French Quarter provided a home for jazz music to flourish

The BIRTH of JAZZ

The original American music was born from New Orleans' gumbo of peoples and cultures. Emerging from the brothels and bars, it became the world's music

The roots of jazz are a tangle of African, European and Caribbean influences, but they all converged in New Orleans, where the Blues of field workers met the 'Spanish tinge' of Latin rhythm and the instruments of the European marching band.

By the 1880s, 'Ragtime' marching bands from New Orleans were touring all over the south. The first proper jazz musician, though, was probably the cornet player Buddy Bolden. In the late 1890s, Bolden mixed Ragtime, Blues and Gospel music – and added two crucial ingredients: improvisation and a looser, syncopated feel that would become known as swing.

He divided the traditional marching band into two: the front line of clarinets, trombones and trumpets, and the second line of rhythm and string instruments. The volume and wildness of his playing were legendary – and remain so, because no recordings survive.

Bolden's new music coincided with the birth of Storyville. Though Storyville did not invent jazz, the vice district fostered the next stage of its development. The new music, known as 'jass' – a slang term that described both sex and dancing – was the ideal soundtrack for Storyville: spontaneous, hedonistic, racially mixed and, as the lyrics of Bolden's *Funky Butt* suggest, candidly sexual. Even the most modest brothel employed a pianist, and the larger establishments had full-size bands.

As with Storyville, the city's moral reformers complained about jazz as a symptom of New Orleans' tendency towards moral decay. But they could do nothing to stop its growth, or its appeal across racial lines.

Bolden, an alcoholic, was taken to a lunatic asylum in 1907, but other musicians picked up his torch. They included Sam 'Jelly Roll' Morton, the pianist who defined the 'swing' feel; Joe 'King' Oliver, the cornet-player with who Louis Armstrong served his apprenticeship; and Oliver's accomplice in the most popular Storyville bands of the 1910s, the trombonist Edward 'Kid' Ory.

In 1917, just before the end of Storyville's glory years, the Original Dixieland Jass Band released the first jazz record, *Livery Stable Blues*. By then, other cities were developing their own styles: the jumping 'hot' sound of New York and the 'stride' piano style of Eubie Blake in Baltimore. Jelly Roll Morton and King Oliver moved to Chicago, and Kid Ory to Los Angeles. By 1920, with help from the advent of Prohibition, jazz was becoming the USA's national music.

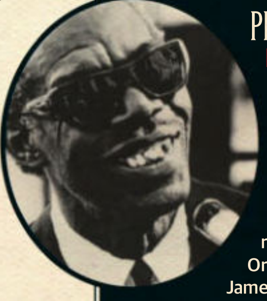
THE LEGENDS OF NEW ORLEANS

The USA's music was born in the bars of New Orleans, but today, it is loved across the world

LOUIS ARMSTRONG

BEST-KNOWN SONG: *STRUTTIN' WITH SOME BARBECUE* (1927)

The grandson of slaves, Armstrong grew up in Storyville and learned to play the trumpet in a home for teenage delinquents. In his playing on *Struttin' With Some Barbecue*, the jazz solo came of age. When he sang of "pickin' on a juicy rib," he wasn't talking about dinner: barbecue was slang for an attractive woman.



PROFESSOR LONGHAIR

BEST-KNOWN SONG: *TIPITINA* (1953)

Born in 1918, Roy 'Professor Longhair' Byrd taught himself how to play piano as a young boy on an instrument that was missing some keys. He cooked up the New Orleans' rhythm, a gumbo of Latin and Blues. His groove went into rock 'n' roll through a younger New Orleans' pianist, Fats Domino, and into James Brown's funk too.

DR JOHN 'THE NIGHT TRIPPER'

BEST-KNOW SONG: *SUCH A NIGHT* (1973)

Still playing in his 70s, pianist Mac 'Dr John' Rabennack is a living link to the origins of jazz and the New Orleans' traditions of Mardi Gras and Voodoo magic. Getting into jazz music after meeting professor Longhair when he was aged 14, Dr John had to turn from playing the guitar to piano after someone shot him in his left hand.

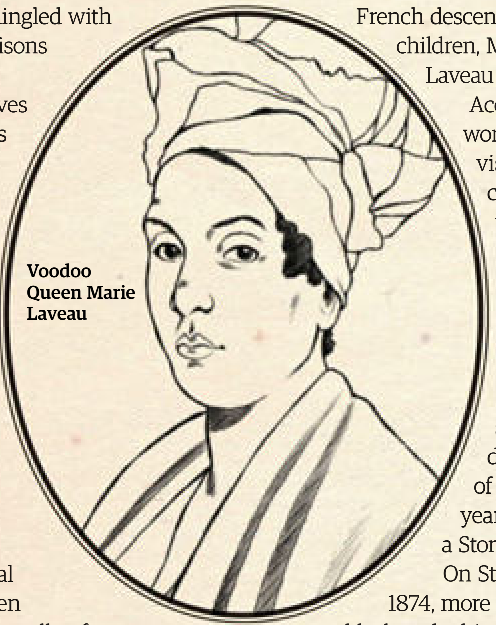
LOUISIANA VOODOO

The greatest of the city's legendary 'Voodoo queens', Marie Laveau ruled the spirits in 19th-century New Orleans

There are several Voodoo traditions but, like jazz and gumbo, Louisiana Voodoo is a unique and complex product of New Orleans. It originated in the mixing of French Catholicism with the West African traditions of slaves. Christian candles, crucifixes, and holy water mingled with 'gris-gris' charms, curses, poisons and amulets.

The arrival of escaped slaves from Haiti in the early 1800s was as crucial to music as it was to Voodoo. In the USA, slaves were banned from playing drums, but in Haiti, drumming was permitted; the drum groups of Congo Square would be crucial to the growth of jazz. Similarly, the Haitians imported the Voodoo Queen, a healer, priestess and magician, into New Orleans' complex and racially charged society.

In New Orleans, the typical Voodoo Queen stood between blacks and whites: she was usually of mixed African and Creole descent. She also stood between Christianity and African folk traditions. There were 15 Voodoo Queens in 19th-century New Orleans, each ruling her own neighbourhood, but the greatest and most powerful - at least according to her legend - was Marie Laveau.



Voodoo Queen Marie Laveau

Born around 1800, Laveau was the daughter of two mixed-race 'free blacks', one of who was a Creole born in Louisiana. She married twice: first to a free black emigrant from Haiti and then to Christophe de Glapion, a white noblemen of French descent. Later, one of their 15 children, Marie, would work with Laveau as a double act.

According to legend, Laveau worked as a hairdresser, visiting the homes of rich clients: a useful way to pick up gossip, especially if, as is rumoured, she traded her cures for information from their servants. Her only professional record is a registration as a liquor importer, which suggests that she had diversified into other forms of entertainment in her later years. She may also have run a Storyville brothel.

On St John's Eve, 23-24 June 1874, more than 12,000 people, black and white, gathered on the shore of Lake Pontchartrain to witness Laveau's rites, which seems to have been a ceremony that mixed Catholic saints and African spirits. Faith in Voodoo remains strong in New Orleans and recently, a public rite was held in a bid to reduce the crime wave that followed Hurricane Katrina.

A Voodoo altar in the French Quarter in 2008

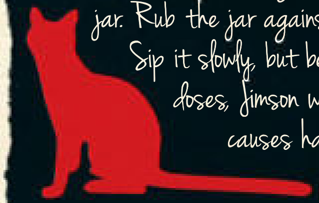
VOODOO SPELLS

Cure-All

Purpose: A cure for all ailments, both mental and physical

You will need: Jimson weed (also known as Moonflower), sulphur (also known as brimstone), honey and a black cat

Instructions: Mix the ingredients in a glass jar. Rub the jar against the black cat. Sip it slowly, but be careful: in large doses, Jimson weed is toxic and causes hallucinations.



Banish a Woman

Purpose: Get rid of the competition

You will need: A voodoo doll, a pin, Spanish moss, Devil's Dung (Asafoetida) and sulphur

Instructions: Stuff the doll with Spanish moss, Devil's Dung and sulphur. Write the other woman's name on a piece of paper, and pin the paper to the doll. Put the doll in a sewer or dump and tell it where to go. Leave, and don't look back.

Feather Fetish

Purpose: Make an enemy sick.

You will need: Colourful feathers and black thread

Instructions: Tie a handful of feathers into a bunch. Tie a second bunch from slightly shorter feathers. Tie the two bunches together in a cross shape, so that it resembles a crude human form. If you place the doll inside your enemy's pillow, they will suffer terrible headaches. If you slowly unwind the thread over a period of days, when the doll falls apart, so will your enemy.

From: Denise Alvarado, The Voodoo Spellbook (Weiser Books, 2014)

© Rebekka Heart, Thinkstock, Alamy

Ronnie Biggs

Train robber, fugitive, celebrity; this infamous character helped pull off one of the most audacious crimes in history

Written by David Crookes

Ronnie Biggs was lying on a railway embankment at Bridego Bridge, less than half a mile from Leighton Buzzard, beside the main line from Glasgow to London. He was with 15 other gang members, waiting for the 3am train knowing that one of the coaches carried an enticing secret: dozens of bags full of cash. It was 8 August 1963, and the men fancied their chances of stealing the lot.

Biggs had been invited to join the gang by Bruce Reynolds, a criminal who had meticulously prepared every detail for such a heist. Biggs had fulfilled his role of recruiting the train driver - an elderly former British Rail worker whose house he had been fixing up. In return, he was guaranteed a minimum £40,000 share, today worth £763,728.

As the train approached, the plan swung into action. The gantry lights switched to amber and red on the approach to Sears Crossing and the train came to a halt. Fireman David Whitby left his cab to investigate, but was bundled away by gang members. The locomotive and coach carrying the cash were uncoupled from the rest of the train. Ronald 'Buster' Edwards and Douglas Goody boarded the cab with another gang member.

Driver Jack Mills was coshed on the head and, falling, struck his skull against the cab wall. But Biggs's train driver took too long to get the train moving to the markers that had been laid; Mills was forced to do the job instead. With the carriage in position, the gang formed a human train, passing sack after sack of cash up the embankment towards a waiting truck. The bags contained £2,631,784 in £1 and £5 notes, the equivalent of £50 million today. Biggs ended up with £147,000 (£2,806,706) for his part, and suddenly he was a very rich man.

Ronald Arthur Biggs was born in Stockwell, London, on 8 August 1929 to Henry Biggs and Lillian Clayton. He had three brothers - Jack, Victor and Terrance - and a sister, Iris. His mother died in 1943, aged 53, from a duodenal ulcer, and his subsequent years were spent in and out of courtrooms - his first appearance in 1945 on a charge of shoplifting from a Littlewoods retail store.

> Before he left to rob the train, Biggs told wife Charmian he was going to be felling trees in Wiltshire

Enemies

Jack Slipper
Slipper was determined to bring Biggs to justice. He travelled to Brazil in 1974 to arrest Biggs, greeting him with the words: "Long time no see, Ronnie." But, pictured on a return flight with an empty seat beside him, was nicknamed 'Slip-up of the Yard' by the press.

DAILY EXPRESS
BIGGS ARRESTED

Colin Mackenzie
Mackenzie was interviewing Biggs for the *Daily Express* in Brazil on the day Slipper arrested him. In 2011, he told a British documentary that he had met Slipper and Detective Inspector Peter Jones the night before. Photographer Bill Lovelace had signalled that Biggs was in the room.

John Miller
Ex-SAS members John Miller, Fred Prime and Norman Boyle abducted Biggs and took him on a yacht, but they lost control off the coast of Barbados. Miller told a TV interviewer he wanted to take him to a country sympathetic to Britain's pleas for extradition.

Ronnie Biggs is arrested following the Great Train Robbery

> "He returned in 2001, giving himself up after 13,068 days on the run"

Biggs was a petty criminal and not even a spell in the RAF in 1947 could put him back on track. He went AWOL and broke into a pharmacy, causing him to be discharged and jailed. Aged 19, he served three months in Lewes Prison for stealing a car, meeting Reynolds for the first time. His crime spree continued for 14 more years, culminating in a four-year stretch for burglary.

Upon his release, he sought to abandon crime and become a carpenter. The 27-year-old met Charmian Brent, aged 17, but soon fell back into his old ways, dragging his girlfriend into his schemes too. Brent was arrested for being the lookout when Biggs and friend Michael Haynes broke into premises in 1957. Biggs was imprisoned for two and a half years. Two months after being released, on 20 February 1960 he married Brent. They had their first child, Nicholas, on 23 July. Biggs settled down and in March 1963 had a second son, Christopher. But he was suffering financially and turned to his old friend, Reynolds, for a loan. Instead, Reynolds offered an invite into his gang.

But while the Great Train Robbery - dubbed one of the greatest crimes of the 20th century - was initially successful, fingerprints found at Leatherslade Farm, where the gang had taken the money after the heist, proved damning. Biggs was found guilty and sentenced to 30 years in prison. Yet that was only the start of his infamy. Locked up in Wandsworth Prison, Biggs had a burning desire to escape. He plotted with fellow convict Paul Seabourne to get over the prison's 25-foot perimeter wall. Biggs suggested parking a van outside, allowing him to jump to safety once he reached the top. The plan was deemed to be a winner.

Biggs's escape relied on Seabourne's smooth release from jail. With that in place, the plot was given the green light. At 3pm on 8 July 1965, Biggs and three other helpful inmates - Brian Stone, Eric Flower and an unnamed Scottish convict - went to the exercise yard. Seabourne's truck pulled up and a rope ladder was thrown over the wall. Biggs and Flower ran while Stone and the Scottish man held back wardens trying to catch them. The two men dropped on to the roof of the lorry before transferring to a getaway car. Biggs had escaped.

His underworld connections served him well. Handed a temporary passport and a route to Paris, he was also offered plastic surgery. At first, Biggs had surgery on his nose, followed by a face-lift. With the job done, he flew to Australia under the alias Terrence Furminger. It was December 1965.

A foreign life on the run began. Biggs moved around Australia, changing his name - becoming Terrence King and Terry Cook, among other aliases - as he sought carpentry work. His wife joined him, using the name Margaret Furminger and bringing their children. They even had a third: Farley, born in Adelaide in April 1966.

By 1968, with the other train robbers all in prison, Biggs was the only one at large, but the net began to close in. A Reuters journalist reported that Biggs was in Melbourne and his face was shown in the media. Biggs borrowed a passport, inserted his own image and flew to Caracus, Venezuela, en route to Rio de Janeiro. He landed on 11 March 1970 under the name Michael Haynes.

But Biggs was to experience heartbreak. His brother, Jack, had died of a heart attack while Biggs was carrying out the train robbery, but nothing could prepare him for the news that his ten-year-old son had been killed in a road accident on 5 January 1971. Biggs said in his autobiography, *Ronnie Biggs: Odd Man Out*, that he considered handing himself in. He decided against it.

Scene of the Great Train Robbery at Sears Crossing

Sunning himself in Rio de Janeiro in 1981, Ronnie Biggs was clear he wanted to remain a fugitive in Brazil

Later that year, he met dancer Raimunda Nascimento de Castro at a club in Rio and they became a couple. In February 1974, she told Biggs she was potentially pregnant with his child. At around the same time, Biggs had been introduced to *Daily Express* journalist Colin Mackenzie. His newspaper wanted the fugitive's story and would pay him £35,000 for it.

The reporter spent two days gathering the story while photographer Bill Lovelace snapped away. On the third day, Biggs and Mackenzie met as usual, but they were quickly joined by Operational Chief Superintendent Jack Slipper, head of Scotland Yard's Flying Squad, who told Biggs that he was there to arrest him.

Slipper was ecstatic that the law had caught up with Biggs. But the Rio police chief wanted to await instructions from Brasilia and Biggs was remanded in custody. When Biggs told his cellmate about his girlfriend's pregnancy, he was told fathering a child in Brazil meant he could not be forced to leave. It was true. Biggs remained in custody for 90 days and Slipper and Jones had to return to London without him.

Biggs sought a divorce from Charmian, intending to marry Raimunda. He swore he was the father of her child in a court and was released on conditional liberty. He was sent back to Rio but told he could not marry. Yet he was able to live as Ronald Biggs again, and in August 1974, his fourth son was born.

Biggs became a celebrity; he had many high-profile visitors and reporters followed him. But trouble was never far. Biggs was kidnapped by John Miller in 1980. He was blindfolded, gagged and put in a sack with his hands taped behind his back. He was placed on a boat and sailed out into the Atlantic, and there were suggestions that newspapers and MPs were aware it was going to happen. Biggs was rescued when a gunboat sailed close by, towing the kidnapping crew to Barbados. The country's Supreme Court ruled that the Barbados Parliament had not yet ratified an extradition treaty with the UK and Biggs was free. He went back to Brazil to resume his life of stardom, but still officers in Britain were determined to bring him back.

A final attempt to extradite Biggs failed in November 1997. Despite the UK and Brazil governments agreeing on extradition, the Brazilian Supreme Court ruled Biggs could no longer be convicted of the robbery. Yet Biggs could not beat ill health. He had two strokes in March 1998 and September 1999 and, looking weak, returned to the UK in 2001, giving himself up after 13,068 days on the run. He was sent to Belmarsh Prison in 2001, marrying Raimunda in July 2002.

Biggs was finally a truly free man in July 2009, released from prison on compassionate grounds. But his new freedom was relatively short lived. On 18 December 2013, he died in a London nursing home, aged 84. A third of his ashes were spread over the scene of the Great Train Robbery.

> Biggs's return to the UK in 2001 was assisted by *The Sun*. He arrived with the paper's logo on his T-shirt

Allies

Bruce Reynolds

Reynolds invited Biggs into the Great Train Robbery gang, having become close friends during their time together in Lewes Prison. Reynolds fled the UK for Mexico and Canada but was arrested on his return in 1968 and jailed for 25 years. Reynolds helped Biggs return to the UK in 2001.

Charmian Brent

Brent was Biggs's first wife and supported him throughout his imprisonment and escape to Australia and Brazil, despite their divorce in 1976. She changed her name back to Brent after the end of their marriage but consulted on a TV series called *Mrs Biggs* in 2012.

Stanley Matthews

Biggs became friends with many celebrities, among them former Blackpool footballer Sir Stanley Matthews, who had tea with the fugitive on a balcony at his home in Rio. He was also visited by another illustrious footballer, former England and West Ham captain Bobby Moore.

Hero or villain?

HEROISM

Biggs is one of the most notorious figures in British criminal history, but many people have bestowed him hero status

VILLAINY

Although only having a minor role in the train robbery, Biggs was a petty criminal and spent 36 years as a fugitive

INFAMY

The most well known of all the train robbers, Biggs revelled in his infamy, even recording a song with the Sex Pistols

© Alamy, Rex Features, Corbis, Thinkstock

FORGOTTEN HEROES OF THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN

75 years ago this month, Hitler was on the verge of becoming master of all of Europe. Only the Royal Air Force stood in his way

Written by Nick Soldinger

On 18 June 1940, Winston Churchill stood up in Parliament. The mood was gloomy. France had just surrendered, most of Europe was now under Nazi control and Britain faced Germany alone. "The Battle of France is over," he announced. "The Battle of Britain is about to begin. Hitler knows he must break us in these islands or lose the war. If we can stand up to him, all Europe may be freed. But if we fail, then the whole world will sink into the abyss of a new dark age."

Churchill had been warning of war for years but few had listened. The Nazis had spent much of the 1930s building the modern war machine that had just ravaged most of Europe. By contrast, British rearmament had only begun in earnest just six months before the conflict began. What little preparations had been made, however, would prove to be enough. But only just.

Hitler's planned seaborne invasion of the British Isles, codenamed Operation Sea Lion, was risky. To succeed, the German Luftwaffe needed to first gain complete air superiority. Although the campaign began on 10 July, the true purpose of it wouldn't become apparent until Hitler's so-called Eagle Day on 13 August. Between those two dates, skirmishes over the Channel, as the Luftwaffe picked off British shipping convoys, disguised the fact that on the mainland two huge air fleets were being assembled at newly captured airfields.

By the time Eagle Day arrived, the Germans had amassed about 2,500 aircraft with the aim of annihilating the RAF and its 660 serviceable fighters. All that now stood between Hitler and his new dark age were the courageous souls who would take on that monstrous armada. Most of them were barely out of their teens, and history would come to remember them as 'The Few'.

Finucane's heroism soon spread beyond RAF ranks. Models of his Spitfire with its distinctive Irish shamrock nose art were even sold in toy shops

Brendan Finucane

NATIONALITY: IRISH
RANK: FLYING OFFICER, 65 SQUADRON

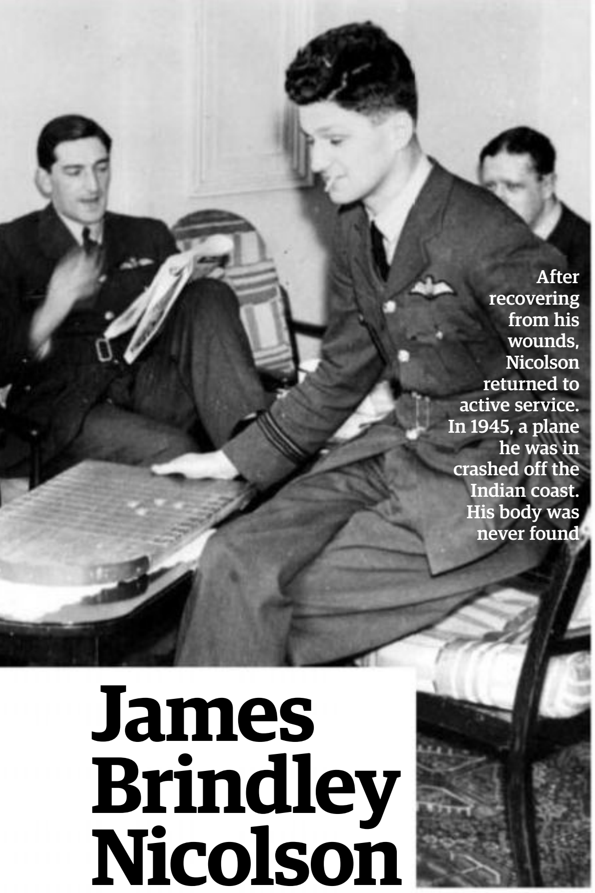
He'd go on to become a poster boy for the RAF, but the career of this legendary fighter pilot almost didn't get off the ground

01

12 August 1940, the day before Eagle Day, witnessed the first major bombing of an RAF airfield as Luftwaffe units probed inland, testing Fighter Command's resolve before the battle ahead. That day, RAF Manston in Kent was playing host to 65 Squadron, and among its ranks was Brendan Finucane. The son of an IRA man, the enigmatic Finucane would go on to become one of Fighter Command's greatest aces, but the 19-year-old was lucky to survive the Luftwaffe's opening gambit.

With news that a significant force was headed their way, 65 Squadron's pilots scrambled. Finucane and his pals sprinted to their Spitfires and clambered into their cockpits. As they were preparing for take off, however, dozens of German fighters and bombers appeared overhead. Hangers, workshops and vehicles began exploding all around them. As Finucane raced to get off the ground, craters began appearing in the runway before him.

Miraculously, however, he got airborne, as did all but one of his comrades. Within minutes they were hurtling through the skies, chasing the Germans back across the Channel. By the time Finucane landed, he'd shot down the first of what would be many enemy aircraft. When the swashbuckling Dubliner was killed in action two years later, he'd added a further 27 kills. In those dark days, Britain was desperate for heroes, and Finucane's bravery had made him famous. More than 3,000 grateful Britons attended his funeral mass.



After recovering from his wounds, Nicolson returned to active service. In 1945, a plane he was in crashed off the Indian coast. His body was never found

James Brindley Nicolson

NATIONALITY: ENGLISH
RANK: FLIGHT LIEUTENANT, 249 SQUADRON

Fighter Command's sole recipient of the Victoria Cross, not just of the Battle of Britain, but of the whole of World War II

02

Despite the extraordinary heroism of The Few, just one of their ranks received Britain's highest military honour, the Victoria Cross. When you're fighting alone high above the clouds, finding witnesses to corroborate individual acts of valour can be tough. In James Nicolson's case, however, his heroics happened low enough to be seen by astonished observers on the ground.

By 16 August, the German raids were relentless. British losses were mounting and things were getting desperate. Around noon a wave of German planes descended on Southampton. Hurricanes from 249 Squadron were scrambled to intercept them. Among the pilots was 23-year-old Nicolson. Moments into the fray he was jumped by German fighters. Shells smashed into his plane, hitting his left eye and foot. The petrol tank was also hit. Fuel poured into the cockpit where it was ignited by the engine. With his cockpit ablaze, Nicolson slid back to bail out, but at that moment an enemy bomber swung in front of him. Despite his plane fast becoming a fireball, Nicolson climbed back into his seat. With only one good eye, up to his waist in flames and his hands blistering on the controls, he closed in on the German plane. Only when he'd destroyed it did the badly burned Londoner bail out, landing unconscious outside Southampton.

Geoffrey Wellum

NATIONALITY: ENGLISH
RANK: PILOT OFFICER, 92 SQUADRON

He was just 18 when the Battle of Britain started, and officially the RAF's youngest fighter pilot

03

Geoffrey Wellum's first sorties as a Spitfire pilot had come in May 1940, covering the evacuation of the British army from Dunkirk. He then flew several sorties a day from his base at Biggin Hill, Kent, during the opening part of the Battle of Britain, protecting shipping in the Channel. Nothing, however, could prepare the teenager for what he was to witness on 13 August 1940, when the Luftwaffe sent 1,500 aircraft to destroy RAF bases.

In his 2009 memoir *First Light*, Wellum vividly recalls the spectacle he encountered. "Within seconds we're among them," he wrote, "each man for himself, fighting his own private battle. Things move terribly quickly. There seem to be hundreds of aeroplanes with everybody shooting at everybody else. I am taken by surprise by the sheer size of this battle in this tremendous arena. Wherever I look the sky is full of aircraft.

"I clamber for height and I have an uninterrupted view. It's magnificent yet appalling. Junker and Heinkel bombers split up, their formations largely decimated, as they head back towards the coast. A Junkers goes down well and truly on fire.

"Yet another plummets to the ground. Three of the crew bail out and only one chute opens, the other two Roman candle. I can see the man at the end of one quite clearly, arms and legs thrashing as he plunges earthwards.

"A Spitfire spins down and a Hurricane dives away, a long trail of black smoke behind it and, at its base, a bright angry red flame. I am transfixed. I don't see anyone bail out. Yet another aircraft goes down in a steep dive. A large one, looks like a Heinkel. My God he's shifting for a big plane and, oh goodness, streaming out behind is a man on the end of a parachute, caught up round the tail and flailing about like the tail of a kite. He may be a Hun, but I wouldn't wish a death like that on anyone."

Decorated for heroism, the huge psychological strain of aerial warfare eventually told on Wellum (back row, right). He was withdrawn from combat operations in 1943

Henderson with Air Chief Marshall Dowding. Houses now stand where RAF Biggin Hill once did, and Henderson has a road there named after her

Elspeth Henderson

NATIONALITY: SCOTTISH **RANK:** CORPORAL, WOMEN'S AUXILIARY AIR FORCE (WAAF)

The wee young woman from Edinburgh who proved she was as brave as any man

04

Without women like Elspeth Henderson and the Dowding System that she helped operate, Fighter Command would have soon succumbed to the mighty Luftwaffe.

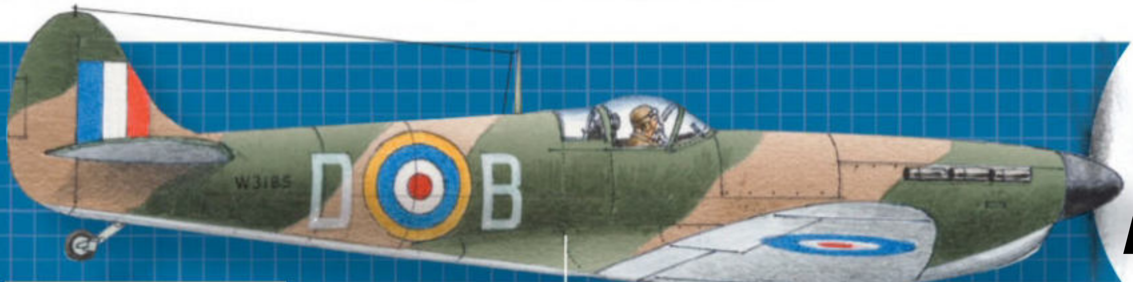
Named after Air Chief Marshall Hugh Dowding, the system was the world's first ground-controlled interception network. It linked observation posts and newly developed radar stations via phone lines to airfields and anti-aircraft batteries. Its ability to forewarn of attacks meant already overstretched squadrons didn't need to constantly patrol the skies but could instead be scrambled in a heartbeat. Its role was to prove pivotal and people like 27-year-old Henderson soon found themselves on the front line.

Towards the end of August, RAF Biggin Hill, where Henderson was stationed, was under daily attack. On 30 August, one raid hit a shelter there killing 39 and entombing many others. Henderson was among the first to start digging them out.

The following day, as she was managing the phones in the operations room, the bombers returned. This time they scored a direct hit on the building that she was in. It was engulfed in flames, and the survivors were ordered to evacuate immediately. Henderson, however, remained at her post and continued to pass on vital information. Only when the smoke became overwhelming did the young Scot go about her escape via a shattered window as bombs exploded all around her.

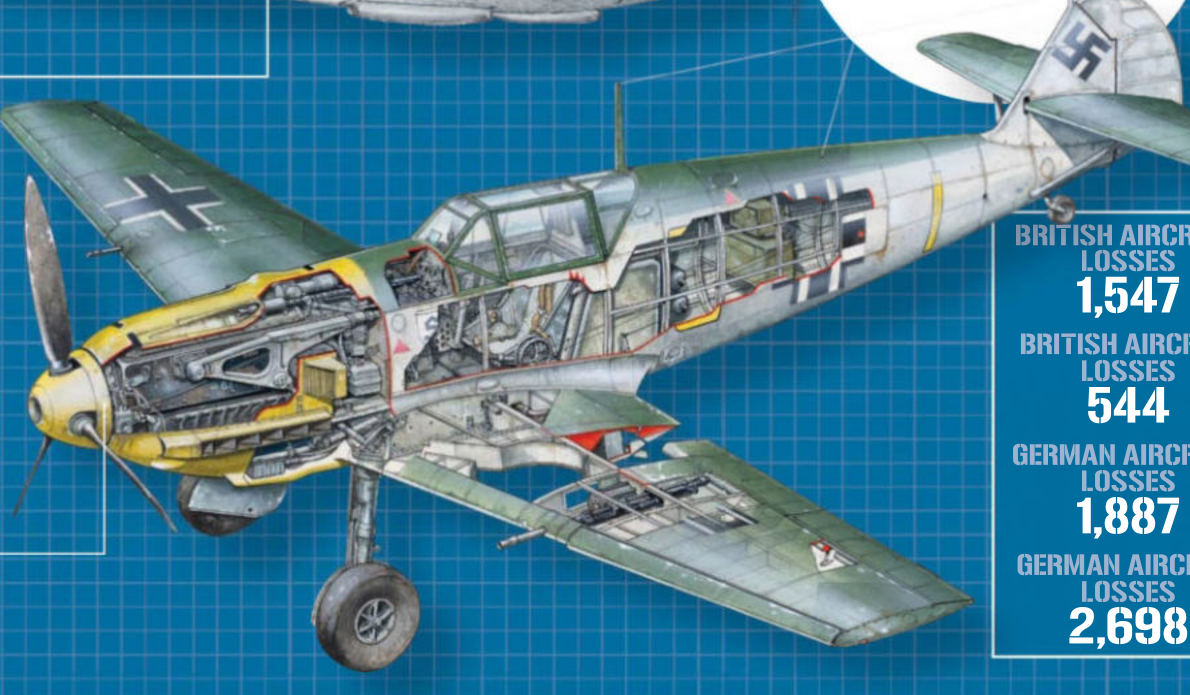
Just six women in the WAAF won the Military Medal during the war. Henderson was one of them. Her citation noted that she'd been awarded it for displaying "courage of an exemplary order."

THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN AT A GLANCE



Spitfire Mk1A

ENGINE ROLLS-ROYCE MERLIN 1800HP V12 MK III
WINGSPAN 36FT 10IN/11.23M
MAX SPEED 362MPH/582KMH
ARMAMENT 8 X .303 BROWNING MK II MACHINE GUNS
RANGE 425M/680KM



Messerschmitt Bf 109E:

ENGINE DAIMLER-BENZ 1200HP V12 605D
WINGSPAN 33FT/9.91M
MAX SPEED 343MPH/553KMH
ARMAMENT 1 X 30MM MK108 CANNON, 2 X 13MM MG17 MACHINE GUNS
RANGE 410M/660KM

BRITISH AIRCRAFT LOSSES	1,547
BRITISH AIRCREW LOSSES	544
GERMAN AIRCRAFT LOSSES	1,887
GERMAN AIRCREW LOSSES	2,698

After the campaign, Sergeant Lacey was promoted to Pilot Officer. He ended the war with a final tally of 28 confirmed kills, and four probable kills

James Lacey

NATIONALITY: ENGLISH
RANK: FLIGHT SERGEANT, 501 SQUADRON

This farm worker's son from Yorkshire took huge risks to bag 18 kills and become the highest-scoring lower-rank pilot of the Battle of Britain

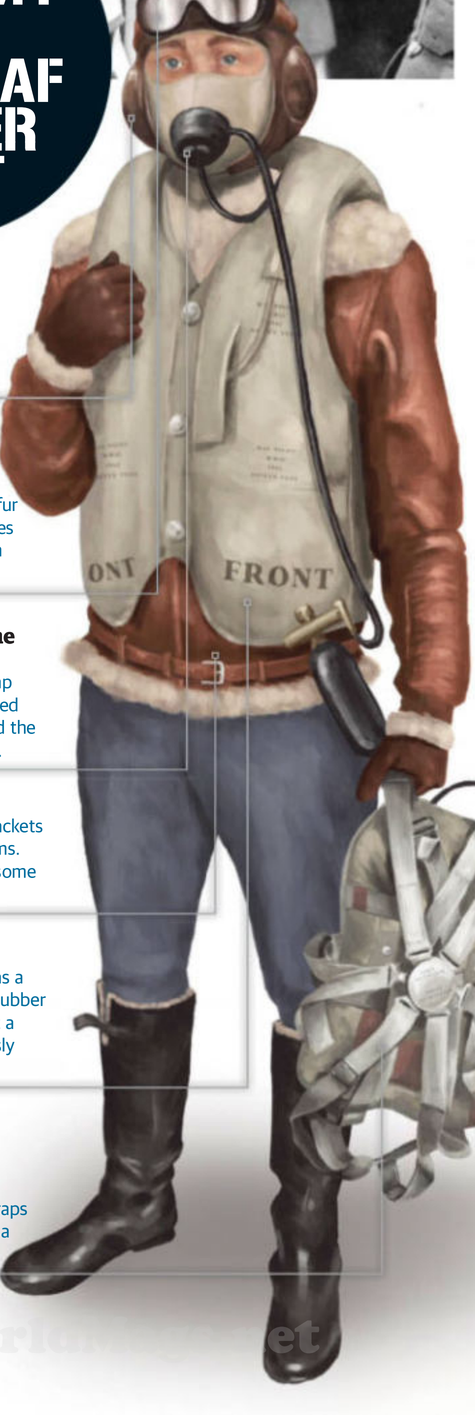
05

By 30 August, as the campaign neared its height, 23-year-old James Lacey was heading back to the coast after a dogfight that had left his plane riddled with 87 bullet holes. While still over the sea, though, his engine gave out. Lacey had bailed out before, but this time he was determined to get his Hurricane home.

Figuring that he had just enough altitude, he decided that he would glide back to land – a distance of some 15 miles. Incredibly, his gamble paid off. Not only did Lacey reach land, but he also managed to put his plane down perfectly on the runway at RAF Gravesend.

"I was lucky," Lacey later recalled. "I was shot down nine times in the 16 weeks the Battle of Britain lasted. I once jumped from a plane that was burning end to end, and once from one that had no tail left. Waiting to go up terrified me. Waiting for that Tannoy to say 'scramble!'. It could make me physically sick. I didn't have butterflies in my stomach back then, I had vultures."

ANATOMY OF A WWII RAF FIGHTER PILOT



Type B flying helmet
Made from leather, lined with chamois and with a layer of cotton padding between, each helmet was customised by the airbase tailor so that the earpieces fitted the wearer.

Mk II flying goggles
The brass frames were usually blackened and the backs of them trimmed around the edges with faux-fur for extra comfort. The laminated lenses also had a blue-green tint to deal with sunshine.

Oxygen mask and microphone
The wool and chamois oxygen mask was fitted to the helmet with four snap fasteners. The front of the mask housed both the inlet for the oxygen tube and the attachment point for the microphone.

Irvin jacket
With no in-plane heating, sheepskin jackets were worn over the top of the uniforms. As the collars could restrict visibility, some pilots would cut them off.

Life vest
Being shot down over the Channel was a real risk, so pilots wore a cotton and rubber inflatable life vest. Pilots nicknamed it a 'Mae West' in honour of the notoriously buxom Hollywood star of the day.

C-2 Parachute
Pilots would grab their parachutes and strap them on shortly after being scrambled. Shoulder, waist and leg straps met at a single point and clipped into a quick-release clasp on the chest.

© Kevin McGivern

Lock shot down 26 enemy aircraft during the campaign

Eric Lock

NATIONALITY: ENGLISH
RANK: PILOT OFFICER, 41 SQUADRON

The highest-scoring RAF ace of the entire Battle of Britain, who managed to shoot down three enemy aircraft in one brief sortie

06

By the start of September, combat had been so intense that many pilots had already notched up more than five kills, giving them the coveted title of 'Fighter Ace'. On 5 September, 21-year-old Eric Lock from Shrewsbury joined them when he added to his tally by shooting down three enemy planes in a matter of minutes.

His combat report reads: "We intercepted a formation of enemy aircraft, attacking the bombers first I engaged a He111, which I followed down until it crashed. I climbed back up to 8,000 feet, saw another He111, engaged that and set his starboard engine on fire. I closed in to about 75 yards and fired two long bursts. Smoke came from the fuselage. I was then attacked by a Me109 who wounded me in the leg. As he banked away, he stall-turned. I fired at him. He exploded in mid-air."

The understated tone of Lock's report belies the true terror of the deadly game of cat and mouse that was being played out in the clouds. By the time his squadron intelligence officer had typed this report up, Fighter Command had lost more than 500 planes while nearly 250 pilots had lost their lives.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A BATTLE OF BRITAIN PILOT

From dawn until dusk every day for 16 weeks, Fighter Command's pilots had to be ready to meet the Nazi threat in the skies

04.00HRS Woken at dawn

All fighter pilots' days started at dawn with a cup of tea brought to them by a junior rank. They wash and dress before being driven in lorries to the dispersal area. Here, by the runway, they eat breakfast – if they have the time – and wait.

10.00HRS "Scramble!"

By mid-morning, the radar stations start picking up incoming enemy aircraft. The dispersal area phone rings. The duty officer answers, nods his head, then clicks on the tannoy and shouts "Scramble!" into the receiver and across the airfield.

10.07HRS Into the air

Having raced to their planes, clambered into their parachutes and climbed into their aircraft, which fitters will already have started for them, pilots begin to taxi down the runway and take to the air.

10.10HRS Mission briefing

With the planes now airborne, through their headphones they hear "vector two five zero, bandits 200 plus, angles three zero", which is code for them to steer a course for 250 degrees, where more than 200 enemy aircraft are incoming at 30,000 feet.

10.15HRS Bandits dead ahead

Enemy planes are spotted heading in from the east with the sun behind them. A dogfight begins, as planes begin one-on-one duels with the German fighters, or go after the slow-moving bombers that are bristling with guns.

10.40HRS The fight ends

German fighters can only fight over English airspace before their fuel starts running out. The RAF pilots then either chase them back over the Channel or pick off any remaining bombers.

11.00HRS Return to base

Those pilots that haven't been shot down return to base. Upon landing they are interviewed by an intelligence officer who compiles a combat report detailing any enemy and RAF planes that have been shot down or damaged.

15.00HRS Second duel of the day

Pilots are scrambled again. At the height of the campaign, pilots flew combat missions two or even three times a day.

20.00HRS Dismissed at dusk

As dusk approaches, after 16 long hours of suspense punctured by minutes of extreme violence in the skies, the pilots are stood down. Those who have survived end their day with a pint at the local.

Bader was shot down over France in 1941 and captured. While a POW, he tried to escape so often that the Germans ended up confiscating his tin legs

Douglas Bader

NATIONALITY: ENGLISH
RANK: SQUADRON LEADER, 242 SQUADRON

This legendary ace lost both his legs in a pre-war flying accident, but that didn't stop him help turn the battle in Britain's favour

07

At the age of 30, Douglas Bader was older than most RAF pilots and his leadership was to prove inspirational to the younger men under him. This was especially true when, on 15 September, the Luftwaffe launched its largest attack against London in the mistaken belief that Fighter Command was so stretched it could destroy its remaining aircraft in one go. The skies were filled that day with 1,500 aircraft and the dogfights lasted until dusk.

With the fighter squadrons attacking in 'big wing' formations of up to 60 planes – a tactic Bader endorsed – the RAF inflicted colossal damage on the Luftwaffe at little cost to themselves. For Bader it would prove a particularly successful day.

Just after noon, his wing ran into a great mass of aircraft, both British and German, outside of London. In fact, the skies were so busy that, according to the report he later gave an intelligence officer, his wing "had to wait until Spitfires and Hurricanes engaging the enemy broke away." Once they had, Bader sent his Spitfire force to attack the German fighters, while he and his Hurricane pilots got stuck into the bombers.

Typically Bader led from the front, most of the time getting the first kill. His report reveals: "[Bader] opened fire at 100 yards in a steep dive, and saw large flash behind the starboard motor of the Do17 as its wing caught fire. He attacked another E/A (enemy aircraft) but it was difficult to get them in his sights as the sky was so full of Hurricanes queuing up to attack E/A. As all the bombers were destroyed S/Ldr Bader's comments are worthy of repetition. 'It was the finest shambles I've been in. For once we had position, height, and numbers'." He was right, 15 September proved to be the tipping point of the entire campaign.

Walerian Żak

NATIONALITY: POLISH **RANK:** FLYING OFFICER, 303 SQUADRON

The pilot who was fighting to free his homeland from the only place left that he could still take on the Nazis

Żak settled in Britain after the war. His medals, including the DFC he's being awarded here, can be seen today at London's Imperial War Museum

08

The men who flew with the legendary 303 Squadron were largely exiled Poles, men who'd seen first hand what the Nazis did to countries they conquered. Many also had families in occupied territory and this may partly explain their fearsome reputation and never-say-die attitude. Walerian Żak, who'd go on to lead the squadron, summed up these qualities during fighting over Sussex on the morning of 27 September.

Żak's was one of 11 Hurricane pilots who attacked a bomber formation protected by a mass fighter escort. Despite being heavily outnumbered, they shot down 15 aircraft including seven bombers.

But the kills didn't come without cost. Two pilots were killed and Żak's own plane was so badly shot up that it caught fire. As did he. Bailing out was his only option, but fearing his parachute would catch fire too, Żak elected to free fall thousands of feet in the hope it'd extinguish the flames. His gamble worked and, though badly burned, the 29-year-old then opened his parachute and landed safely.

Albert Gerald Lewis

NATIONALITY: SOUTH AFRICAN **RANK:** FLYING OFFICER, 504 AND 249 SQUADRON

The courageous son of empire who gave nearly everything to defend what he would have called the mother country

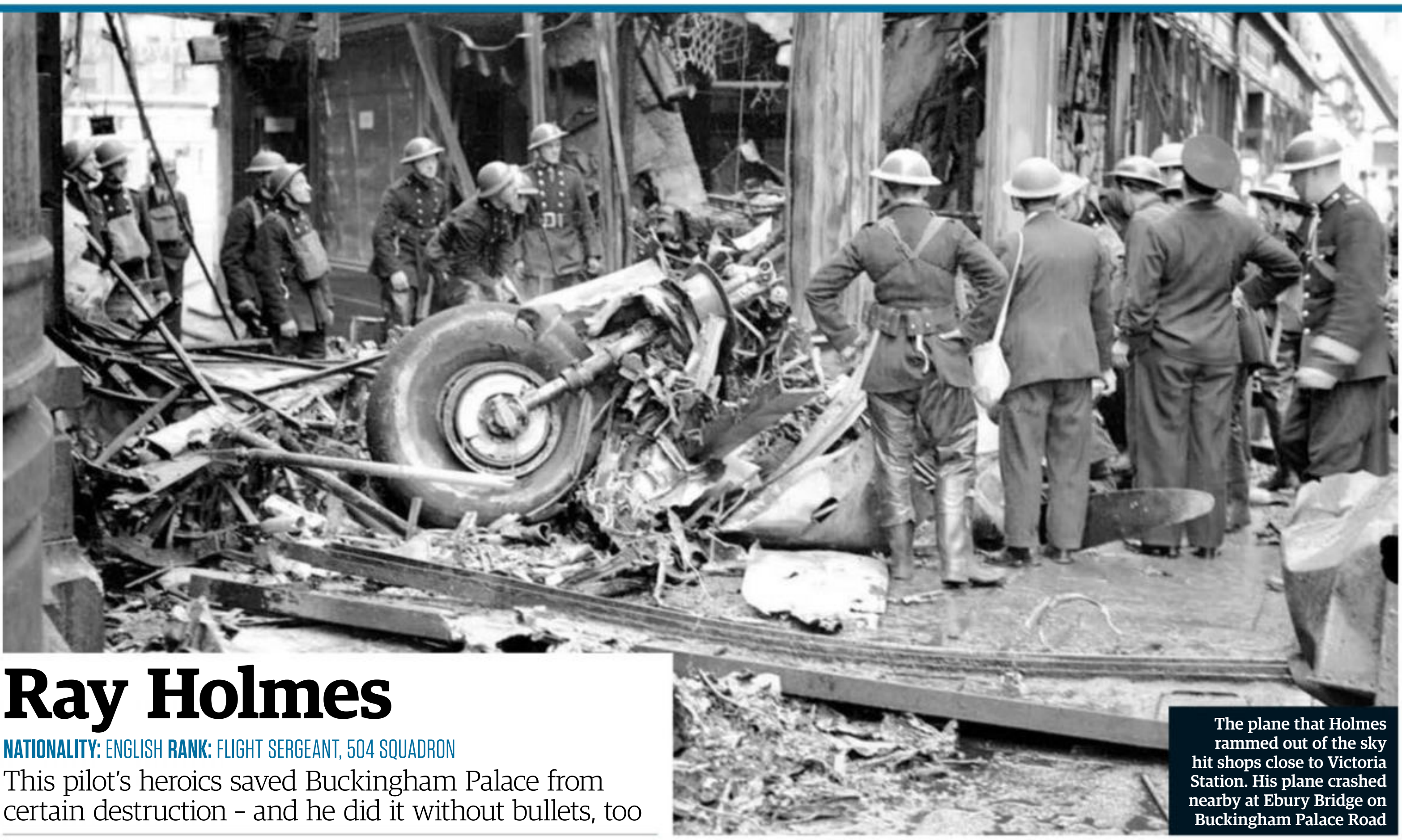
09

As well as Britain and Europe, Fighter Command pilots came from all over the British Empire. One of the finest was South African Albert Lewis, and as the campaign began drawing to a close at the end of September, he experienced the best and worst that life as an RAF fighter ace offered. On 27 September, he shot down an astonishing six aircraft in one day, taking his tally for the war to 18. The very next day, however, he was shot down himself.

While returning from a patrol, the 22-year-old was jumped by a pack of German fighters. His plane was hit at 30,000 feet. Shrapnel tore through his legs and his Hurricane caught fire. Flying at 350mph, the blaze soon whipped up into an inferno. "When I pulled back the canopy," he later recalled, "the flames roared up around my face. I pulled the release of my harness and got out. The suddenness with which I parted company with the plane caused me to be shaken around like an old rag."

Lewis landed safely but had suffered severe burns to his legs, hands, throat and face. His eyes were also so badly scorched that he was blind for two weeks.

Despite his injuries, Lewis returned to active service within three months of being shot down. He later served in the Far East and survived the war



The plane that Holmes rammed out of the sky hit shops close to Victoria Station. His plane crashed nearby at Ebury Bridge on Buckingham Palace Road

Ray Holmes

NATIONALITY: ENGLISH **RANK:** FLIGHT SERGEANT, 504 SQUADRON

This pilot's heroics saved Buckingham Palace from certain destruction – and he did it without bullets, too

10

By 11 October, the Battle of Britain was over. While Hitler hadn't officially cancelled the invasion of Britain, he had formally postponed it. It marked a true turning point in the war. It was Nazi Germany's first defeat and proof that the Führer's ideologically driven killers weren't invincible.

What didn't stop, however, was the bombing of Britain, which would only intensify over the next seven months as the Battle of Britain dovetailed into the Blitz.

London had first been bombed on 24 August, accidentally and against the express orders of Hitler himself, as it turned out. But the revenge bombing of the city of Berlin by the RAF the very next day so infuriated him that the focus of the Battle of Britain was switched from destroying Fighter Command and its bases to destroying Britain's infrastructure. It was to prove a costly error. The great raids sent to terrorise London began in earnest on 7 September, and had soon become a regular occurrence.

On Sunday 15 September at 11.30am, a force of 100 bombers and 200 fighters approached London. As they were tracked by the radar station at Uxbridge, where Churchill just happened to be visiting the operations room that day, 250 fighters were despatched to deal with them.

By noon, the surviving bombers arrived over central London. Here, they were engaged by Hurricanes from 504 Squadron. One was being piloted by 24-year-old Ray Holmes, who attacked several bombers, before latching onto a badly damaged one heading straight for Buckingham Palace. Holmes wasn't to know, but the plane was actually unmanned. It'd been so badly shot up over south London that its crew had bailed out. Its pilot, Oberleutnant Robert Zehbe, had left the plane on a fixed course before parachuting to what he thought was safety. Coming down near the Oval cricket ground, however, he was attacked by an angry mob and later died of his wounds.

Crewless it may have been, but Zehbe's bomber still had a full payload, enough to obliterate the palace. Holmes closed in behind it, lined it up in his sights, and pressed the Hurricane's trigger. But he was out of ammo. The young Liverpudlian then made a desperate decision. "There was no time to weigh up the situation," he revealed afterwards. "[The German] aeroplane looked so flimsy. I just went on and hit it for six. I thought my plane would cut right through it."

Flying at more than 400mph, Holmes rammed the German bomber's tail. It caused his Hurricane to plunge into a steep nosedive. He was forced to bail out, but the impact had also snapped the bomber in two, and had flipped the remaining fuselage over so wildly that the g-force ripped both its wings off.

The bomb load then fell free, and although part of it did hit the palace, the bulk missed, while the plane itself was knocked clear. It ended up crashing by Victoria Station without further loss of life. Holmes's staggering courage had ensured a vital part of Britain's heritage would survive the war.

GERMANY'S FIGHTER ACES

With 111 kills between them, the top three Luftwaffe pilots accounted for seven per cent of all RAF losses

Oberleutnant Helmut Wick

Battle of Britain kills: 42

Wick was the highest-scoring pilot of the entire Battle of Britain. The 25-year-old became only the fourth member of the German armed forces to be awarded the King's Cross of the Iron Cross with Oak Leaf Clusters. He was killed in combat over the Channel in November 1940.

Major Adolf Galland

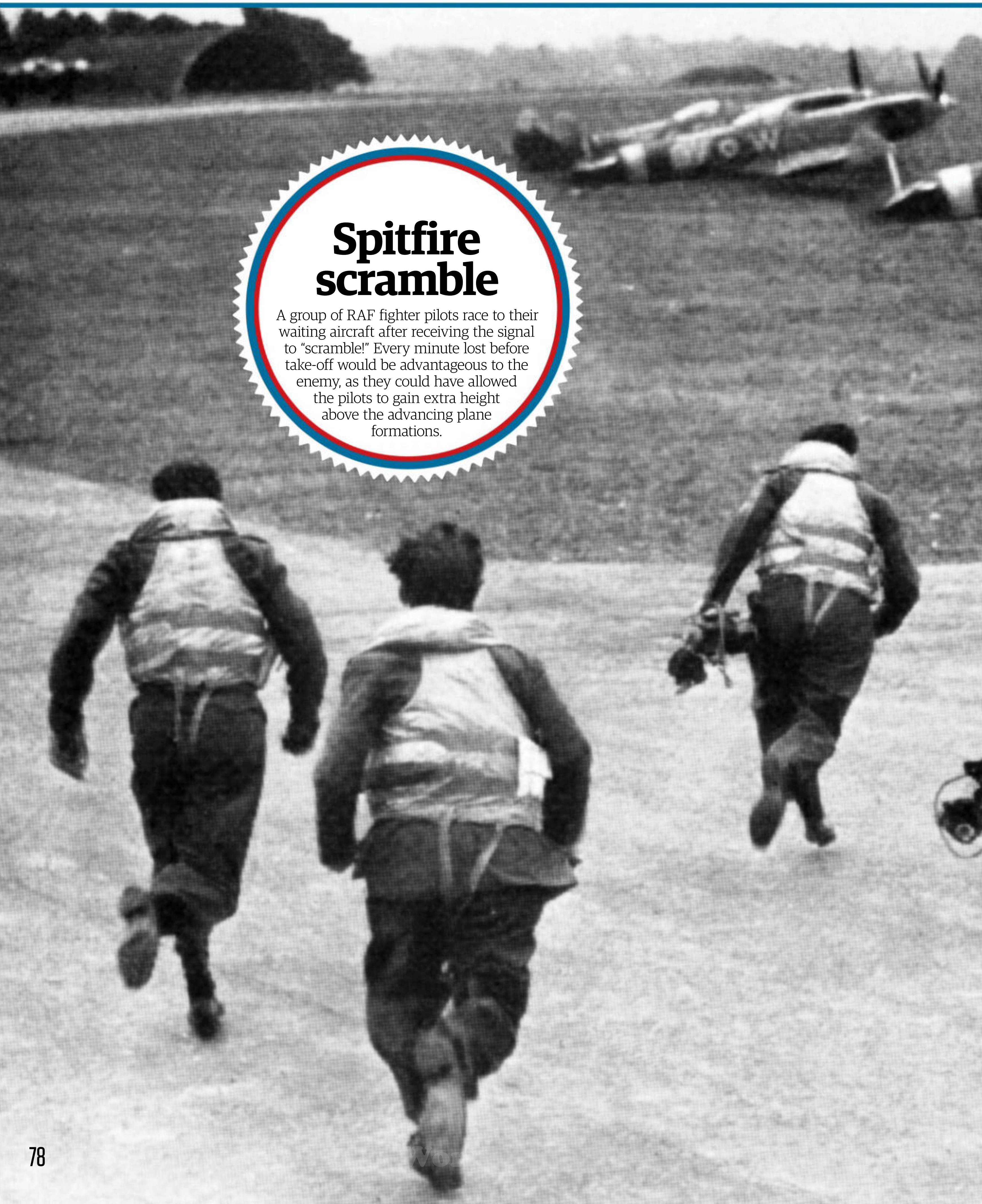
Battle of Britain kills: 35

Galland would go on to become the youngest general in the German military, attaining the rank of general of the fighter arm in 1941. His total number of kills for the war was 104, despite being banned from combat between December 1941 and the end of 1944 by Hitler himself.

Hauptman Walter Oesau

Battle of Britain kills: 34

By the time the Battle of Britain started, Oesau was already a veteran of the Spanish Civil War, the invasion of Poland and The Battle of France; he had 14 kills. By the time he was killed in May 1944 by an American pilot, he'd extended that tally to 127.



Spitfire scramble

A group of RAF fighter pilots race to their waiting aircraft after receiving the signal to "scramble!" Every minute lost before take-off would be advantageous to the enemy, as they could have allowed the pilots to gain extra height above the advancing plane formations.

© Alamy, Getty Images, Thinkstock

Alfred Vs The Vikings

How a defeated and abandoned king rose from the ultimate underdog to become one of the most celebrated monarchs in English history

Written by Frances White

The rain thundered down on the wet, swampy moors of Wessex. A crack of lightning set the sky alight before the wasteland was plunged into darkness once more. Alfred staggered as he ran breathlessly through the plains, accompanied by a handful of men. They were all pale, shivering and soaked to the bone.

"We must find shelter." The words had barely left Alfred's mouth before his foot caught on a root and he crashed into the mud. "My lord," his companion offered his hand, but Alfred shook his head and pushed himself to his feet. Standing breathlessly in the wide, open plain he glanced back to the land that was once his. The cities of Wessex were a mere glimmer in the distance, little lights where he had grown into a man, shot his first boar and fathered his children. Now they belonged to his enemies and he was an exile, betrayed by those he thought loyal, no longer a king and anything but great.

Alfred was not born to be king. He wasn't strong, he suffered with illness throughout his life and most of all, he was the fifth-born son. He seemed destined to a life of study in the priesthood, something he was perfectly happy about. Although far from a coward, he was milder and more thoughtful than his rowdy brothers. However, he had been born in a time of unrest and war.

Since the attack on Lindisfarne monastery in 793, Viking raids all around Britain had increased in number and ferocity. In 865, a huge army dismounted from a fleet of ships, and while the previous attacks had been men eager for quick plunder, this was an army that didn't intend to return home. It wanted one thing – conquest.

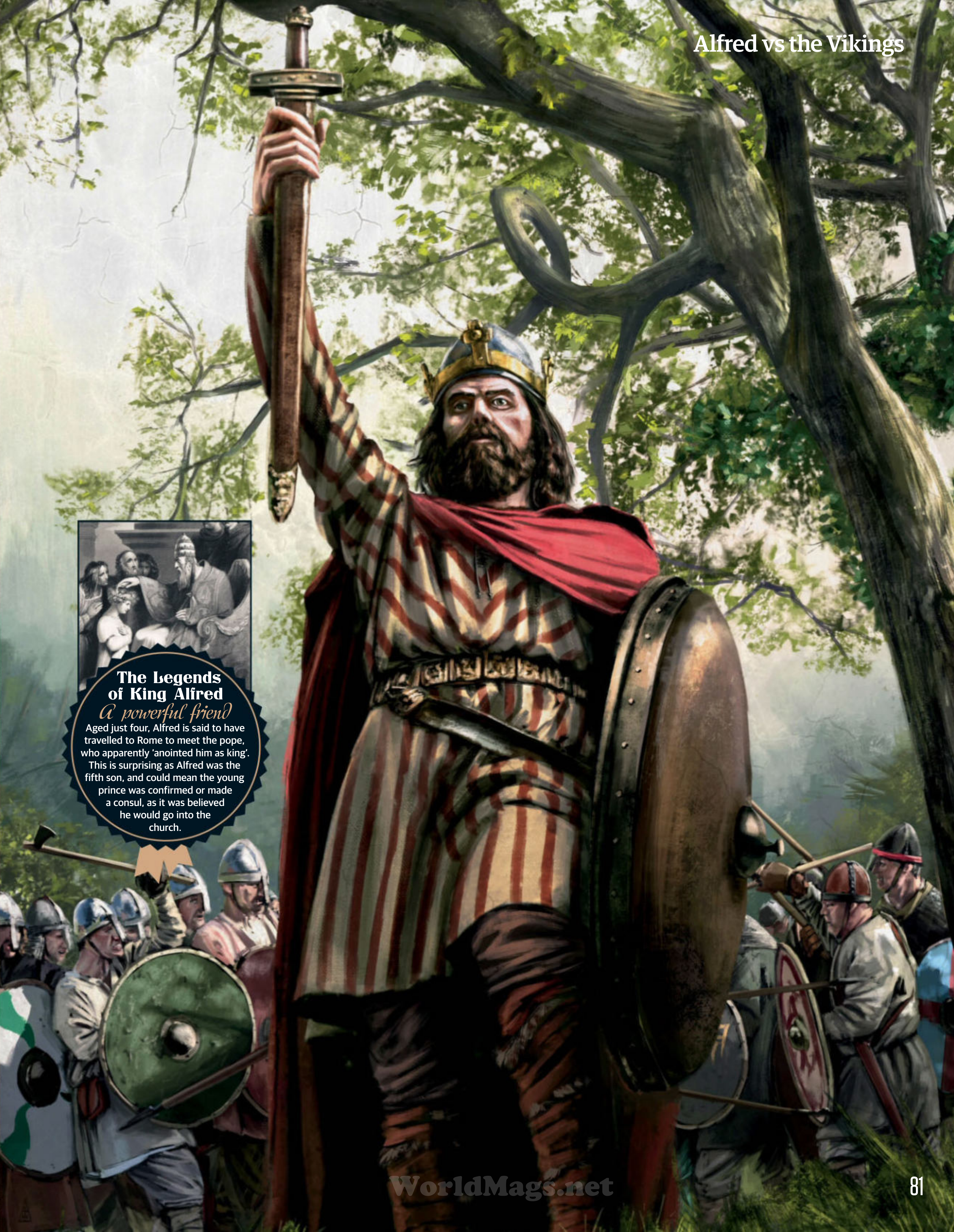
This attack was very bad timing for the kingdom of Wessex. Alfred's father, king of Wessex for nearly 20 years, was dead. The throne passed between his two eldest sons, but death followed them both quickly, and in 865, the leadership fell to Alfred's older brother Æthelred.

In 866, the Viking army was on the move. At least 1,000 strong, it slaughtered its way across the country, felling any nation that stood in its way. East Anglia, Northumbria and even Mercia, Wessex's northern neighbour, became Viking property. Those kings who tried to pay the invaders off, such as the East Anglian king, Edmund, found themselves later repaid by swift and brutal conquest. Soon, the only Anglo-Saxon nation that remained unclaimed by the pagan raiders was the exposed kingdom of Wessex.

The Vikings were not hesitant about making their move; they captured Reading in the winter of 870 but suffered a surprising defeat at Englefield by a small Anglo-Saxon force. Spurred by news of this triumph, the young king and his brother were determined to stop the raiders in their tracks. Fuelled by the taste of victory, Alfred and Æthelred gathered their forces for a raid on the Viking stronghold in Reading.

Although they were filled with dogged determination, this was the first time both of the brothers had faced a real battle situation, and it didn't end well. Although they achieved initial success, when the gates of the fortress opened a wave of bloodthirsty Vikings poured out and laid waste to the Wessex forces. The English turned and fled for their lives, pursued for miles. It was a humiliating defeat for the man who would one day be known as 'great'.

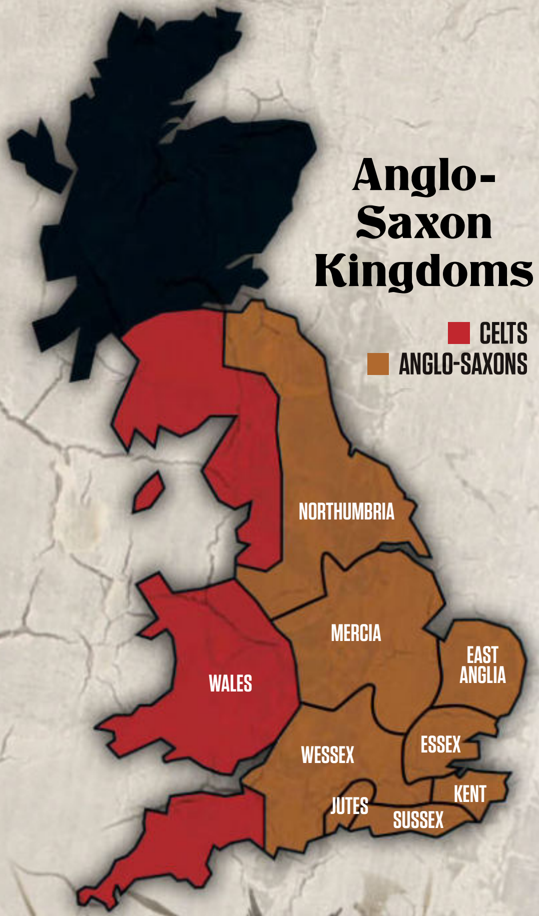
For the Vikings the victory was all the encouragement they needed. With Wessex exposed and the rest of England in submission, they



The Legends of King Alfred

A powerful friend

Aged just four, Alfred is said to have travelled to Rome to meet the pope, who apparently 'anointed him as king'. This is surprising as Alfred was the fifth son, and could mean the young prince was confirmed or made a consul, as it was believed he would go into the church.



Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms

stormed towards the centre of the region. The raiders outnumbered the fractured and broken Wessex forces considerably and this skeleton army could only watch as the Vikings moved closer to their capital. Although the Saxons put up a brave resistance, the battlegrounds transformed into scenes of slaughter, and as the brothers faced the Vikings for the ninth exhausting time, the Wessex army fled in panic.

The bodies of Anglo-Saxon dead were strewn about the field, and the king received a mortal wound. Within a month he was dead, and his passing was followed by the arrival of a fresh fleet of Viking ships.

Æthelred had sons, but they were young, and with the fate of Wessex dangling on a knife edge, it was agreed that Alfred would rule, in the hope that a strong ruler could unite the forces and claim victory from the jaws of defeat.

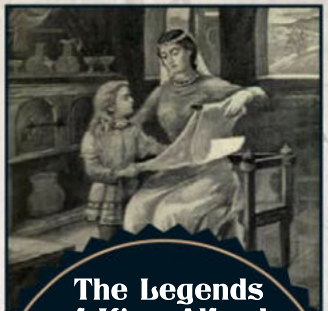
It is difficult to think of an English crown more burdensome than the one Alfred inherited in 871, aged just 22. With the Viking army ploughing its way through Wessex and drawing dangerously close to the capital, Alfred decided that he would try to settle things on his terms. He set out to halt the army's advance at Wilton, less than 30 miles from his capital city of Winchester.

One thing was immediately obvious - Alfred was outnumbered. He had struggled to quickly assemble a force and the Viking ranks were swelling with eager new conquerors and gold seekers. Aware that this was his first battle as king, Alfred knew he had no option but to lead from the front. He ordered his men to form the shield-wall and faced his mighty enemies. Perhaps benefiting from the strength that only men defending their homeland are gifted, the Wessex forces somehow managed to hold their ground. What they lacked in numbers they made up for in will and they destroyed the enemy shield-wall. In mild disbelief, Alfred watched as the Vikings fled and his men celebrated around him.

But young Alfred made a crucial mistake. He had failed to take advantage of his victory by pressing the retreat. The Vikings regrouped and swarmed the field. They rumbled towards the unsuspecting foe and in a moment victory turned to slaughter and it was the Wessex men, not the Vikings, who fled for their lives.

For Alfred, this defeat was the worst one yet. His army, or what remained of it, was in tatters. He had watched all the other kingdoms fall and it seemed inevitable that his own would follow. However, little did he know that the Vikings' patience too was wearing thin. No other kingdom had put up as much of a fight as Wessex and even though they had won many battles, it had come at a great loss to their numbers.

With both forces spent, Alfred made 'peace' with the Vikings. He most likely paid them a huge amount to withdraw, and for a



The Legends of King Alfred

Quick learner

Alfred's mother, showing her children a beautiful book of Saxon poetry, told them that whoever was first able to memorise it would get to keep it. Alfred was fascinated, but unable to read. So he took it to tutors and managed to learn it, receiving the book in reward.

Accounts liken Alfred's ferocity during battle to that of a 'wild boar' good few years it worked. However, in 876, Alfred faced a new foe, the Viking king Guthrum.

Guthrum had already managed, through great cunning, to travel through the heart of Wessex and seize the town of Wareham from under Alfred's nose. Although they made a treaty of peace, the arrival of hundreds more Viking ships indicated relations were anything but friendly. With his army reinforced, Guthrum headed straight towards Alfred's stronghold in Chippenham with one aim in sight. He didn't want a quick raid or a battle, he wanted Wessex, and to get it he would destroy the one thing holding it together – Alfred.

Guthrum planned his attack perfectly. The Twelth Night was a festival that took over the entire city, a season of revelry with eating, drinking and merriment. Every person from king to peasants was part of the celebration and the defences of Chippenham were exposed and unguarded. Guthrum took advantage of this lapse and the city was overrun by Vikings within moments. Alfred had no time to summon an army and was forced to flee with his family to Wiltshire. However, it turned out that the powerful Viking king with his huge force presented a very convincing argument, and one by one the nobles of Wessex bowed to their new king. The leadership of Wessex was destroyed and Alfred, with nobody to call on, fled into the darkness of the moors.

This was more than humiliation for the king – it was the lowest point in his life. The loss of riches meant little, as Anglo-Saxon kings did not sit on golden thrones, but side by side on the mead bench with their faithful companions. And that was just it – he had no companions, he was alone. In a world where loyalty and faithfulness were prized above all, he had been cast out, a virtual exile because of a chain of swift and brutal betrayals.

Alfred could have easily succumbed to the hopelessness of his situation, but instead he decided to fight. He and a small band of followers built a hidden camp in a swamp in Athelney, Somerset, and used it as a base to unleash hell upon the invaders. For months Alfred and his men fought a guerilla war against the Danes, sneaking out of Somerset, killing small parties of Vikings they passed, looting camps and seeking out the enemies' vulnerabilities. Their number one target was the English who had betrayed Alfred, hoping their deaths would send a clear message to his people that the king had not abandoned them.

Tales of Alfred's deeds soon spread throughout the population, comforting those loyal that the king would return and free them from their Danish suppressors. Slowly but surely a secret network of communication between the exiled king and his loyal earls formed. For Guthrum, the attacks by Alfred and his

Anatomy of an Anglo-Saxon warrior

Shield

The crucial piece of equipment for any Anglo-Saxon warrior, one of the primary battle tactics was the shield-wall. Not only did this protect against the enemies' missiles, but could also be used to push forward and break the enemy line. The first shield line to break would be the losers, so hardy, strong shields were essential.

Spear

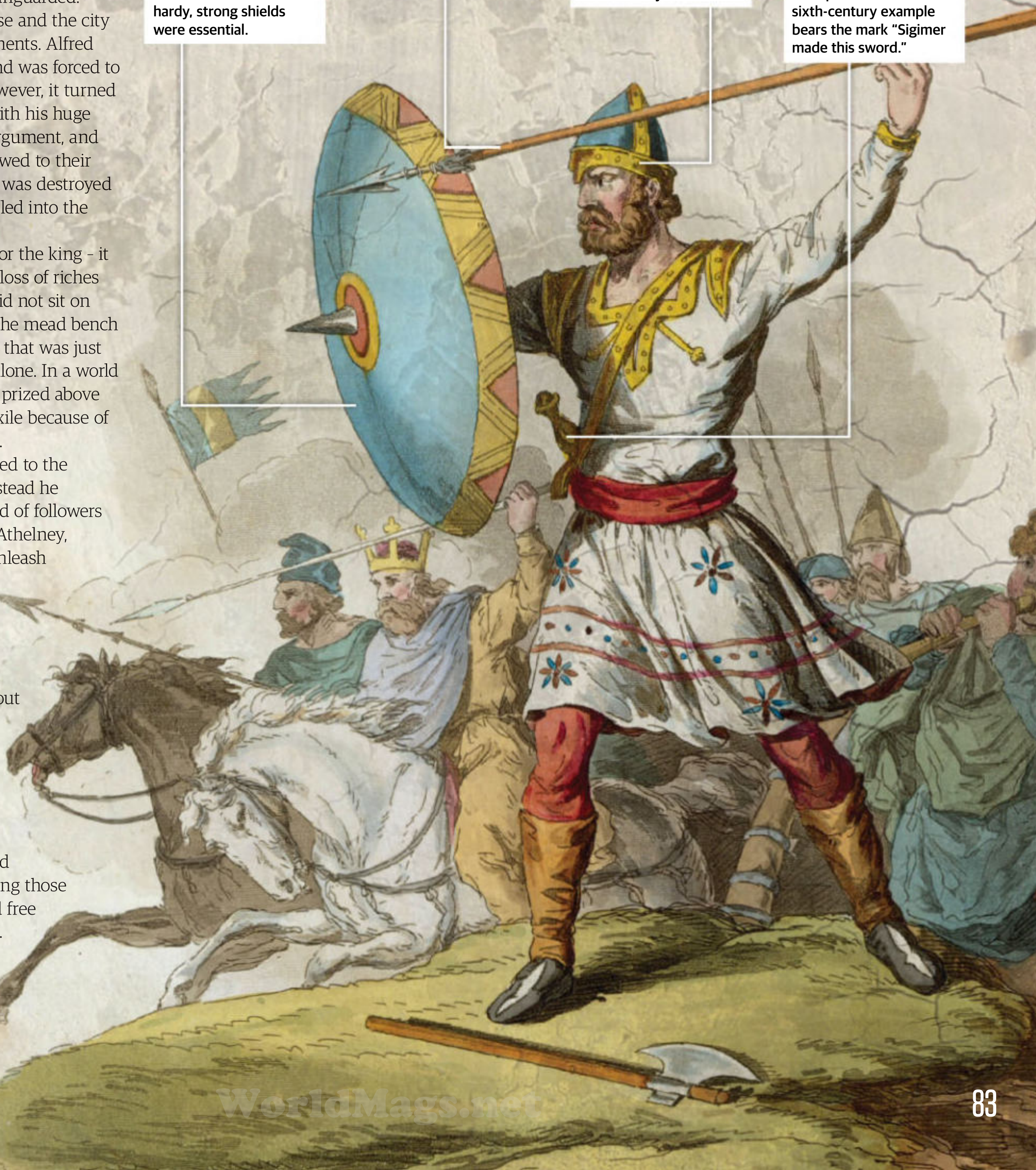
Possibly the most common Anglo-Saxon weapon, spears went hand in hand with the shield-wall tactic, being thrown as javelins and thrusting weapons. The size and material of spearheads differed hugely, as did the length – ranging from about five foot to over nine foot.

Helmet

Known as 'helms', the lack of evidence of Anglo-Saxon helmets have led many to believe that they were not commonly used, or were made from perishable materials like leather. The earliest Anglo-Saxon helmet discovered was found at Sutton Hoo and dates as far back as the sixth century.

Sword

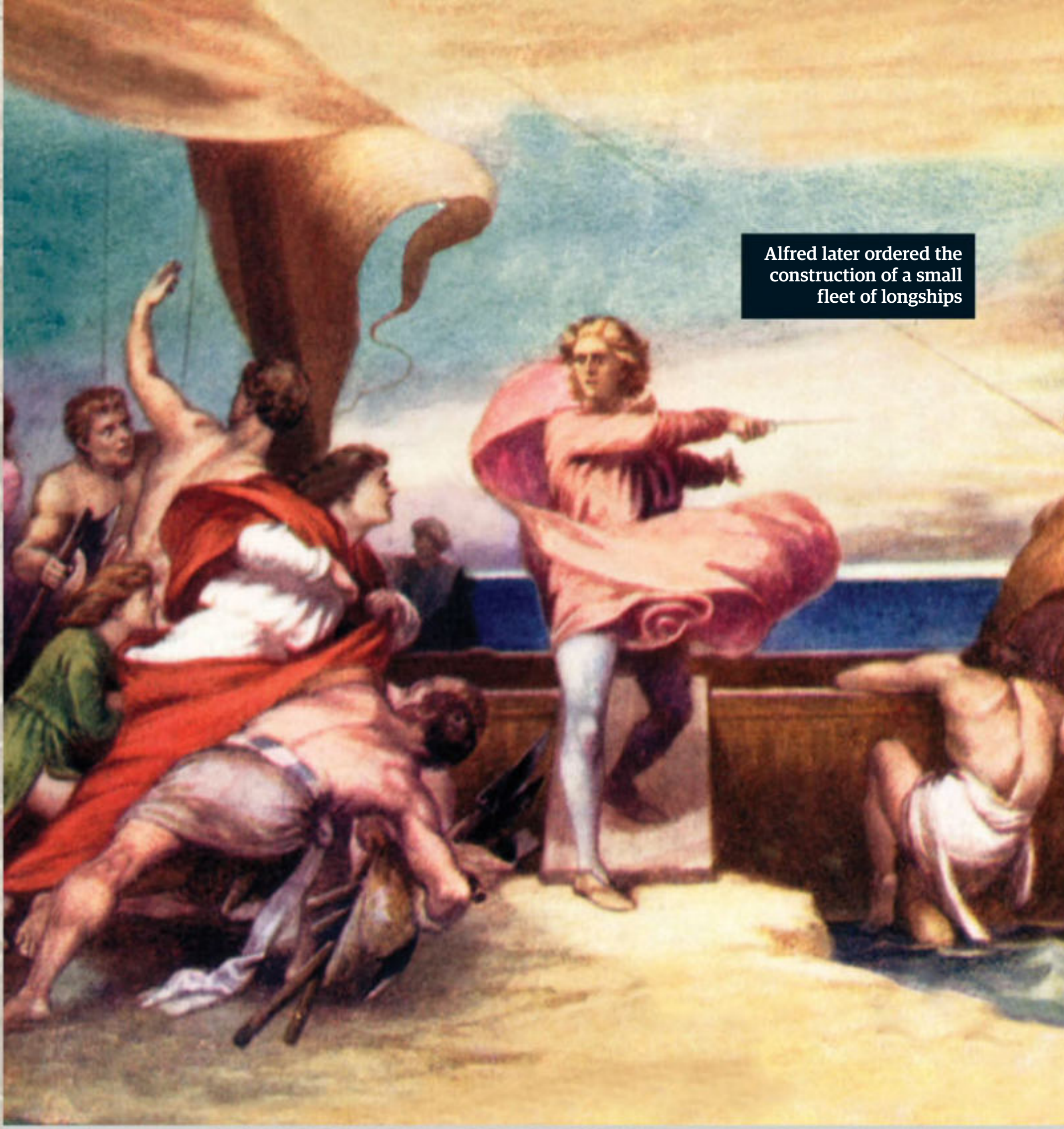
Swords were very treasured items, with connotations of status, and not just any soldier could wield one. Rather than melting iron ore, the blades of swords were constructed from several small pieces of iron or welded together. Swords would also often be decorated with inscriptions, and one sixth-century example bears the mark "Sigimer made this sword."



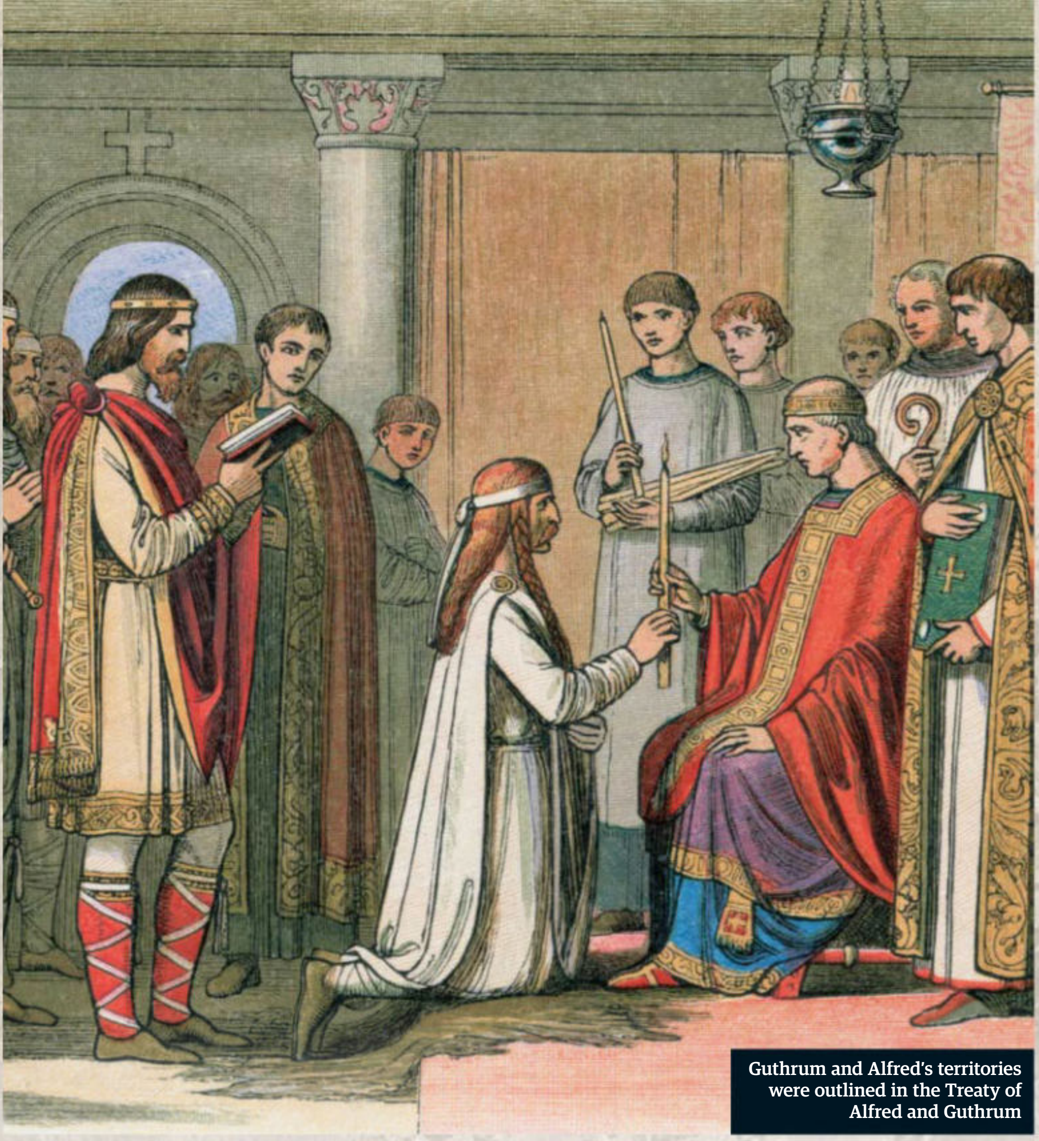
Search for a king's remains

Although we do not know the exact circumstances of Alfred's death, it is known that he suffered from a lifelong condition that may have been Crohn's disease. After his death, Alfred was first buried in the Old Minster in Winchester in 899, but four years later his body was moved to the New Minster. According to legend, this was because his body wandered around the church, but it is more likely that New Minster was the original intended resting place. He didn't get to rest for long though, as in 1110 Alfred's body, along with the monks, was transferred to Hyde Abbey. In 1539, during the reign of Henry VIII, the church was demolished, however, the graves remained intact.

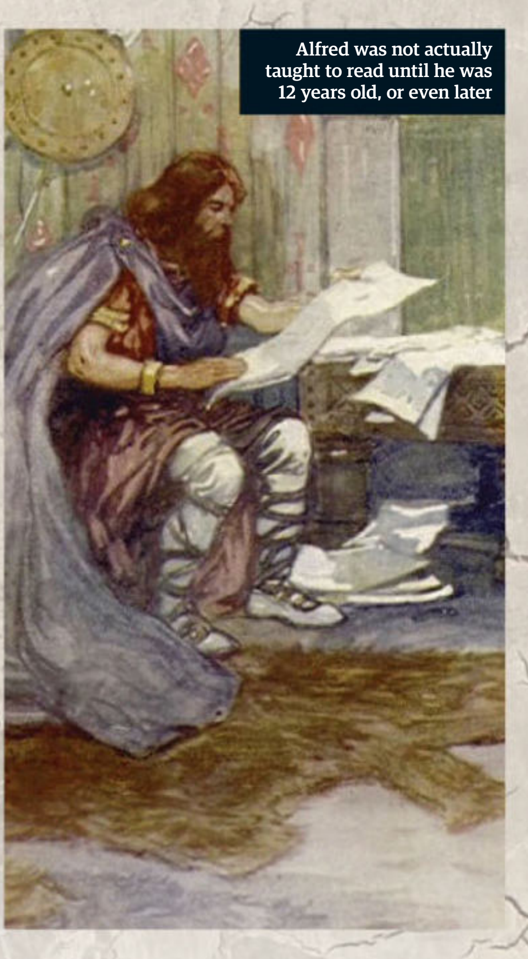
The site lay pretty much untouched, until it was purchased to construct a prison in 1788. Convicts likely discovered the coffins while ridding the site of rubble, and promptly pocketed anything of value. Any bones found were simply tossed around the area. The prison was torn down between 1846 and 1850, and in 1999 an excavation discovered not only the foundations of the abbey, but also some bones. However, to much disappointment, these bones were found to belong to an elderly woman, and the rest of the excavation objects were placed in a store room in Winchester museum. However, in 2014, it was announced that a fragment of pelvic bone from this find had belonged to a man aged between 26 and 45, who died between 895 and 1017. Although it has not yet been proven, this age and date range makes it very likely that the bone belongs either to Alfred or his son, Edward.



Alfred later ordered the construction of a small fleet of longships



Guthrum and Alfred's territories were outlined in the Treaty of Alfred and Guthrum

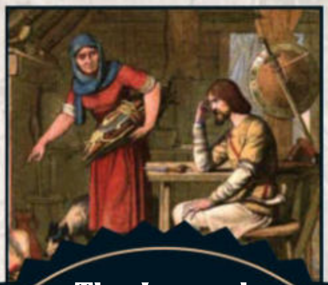


Alfred was not actually taught to read until he was 12 years old, or even later

band of warriors were the last stumbling block to full control of Wessex, and he wanted rid of the persistent pest once and for all.

By the middle of April, Alfred was ready for war; he sent out a secret summons and assembled those faithful to him – an army of several thousand men – and headed for Guthrum's stronghold in Chippenham. Guthrum soon learned of this large gathering, assembled his own army, and headed to intercept Alfred. The time for pay-offs and promises was over. Guthrum didn't care how many riches Alfred could offer – he wanted to rule unrivalled, which is exactly what Alfred wanted too.

Before he was able to reach Chippenham, Alfred caught sight of his enemy; a menacing shield-wall of towering Vikings jeered the exiled king. Alfred hastily formed his own shield-wall, and fortified it not only with physical strength but with a rousing speech. He implored his men to summon their courage, damned those who would dare to run, and promised glory to those who remained. Then he joined the wall and advanced.



The Legends of King Alfred

Burning of the cakes

This legend is one of the most well known. While Alfred was on the run from the Vikings after the attack at Chippenham, he apparently sought refuge in the home of an old peasant woman. Seeing how run down, tired and hungry he was, she took pity on Alfred, unaware he was the king, and promised him food and shelter if he watched her cakes (small loaves of bread) while she went out. The king, consumed by his own problems concerning how he was going to beat the invaders, was distracted and let the cakes burn. When the woman returned, she scolded, and in some accounts even struck the king for his absentmindedness.

As the two walls drew close, the sky blackened with spears. Men were struck and fell, but both lines steadily advanced. As the Vikings mocked their opponents, Alfred made his cries of encouragement heard over the taunts. By now the walls were mere feet from each other, but the Vikings had one last trick. They unleashed their berserkers, savage warriors who used hallucinogens to drive them into a bloodthirsty rage. The naked men crashed into the Wessex shield-wall, but the effect was not as Guthrum had hoped. The Anglo-Saxons stood strong and unfazed, slaughtering the berserkers within moments. When the two shield-walls crashed into each other, the Saxons were stronger than ever. Spears jabbed, desperate to find a weak point to expose and force the shield-wall open.

The battle waged on into the afternoon, the ground was littered with corpses and those that remained were crippled with exhaustion. It transformed from a battle of might to one of endurance. With their forces equally matched, only the men with more resolve would emerge as the victors, and the Vikings were flagging. The fact was simple – the men of Wessex cared more for their home than the invaders ever could.

Finally, the Viking shield-wall was broken. The Saxons unleashed hell upon their invaders. Chaos reigned in the Norse ranks and the desperate men turned and fled. Alfred was not going to make the same mistake that had cost him so dearly again and he led the charge after the retreating men, staining the plains red with Viking blood. Guthrum managed to make it to Chippenham and attempted to begin a siege, but Alfred's resolve could not be broken. He set up his forces outside, waiting for the inevitable surrender.

After 14 days, Guthrum's will was spent. He begged Alfred for a chance to escape with his life, he would give the king anything – as many hostages as he wanted – he just wanted to leave. No Viking leader in history had offered such one-sided terms to an Anglo-Saxon king. Some would have taken advantage of this sign of desperation, but Alfred, although a warrior, was not a brute. He granted Guthrum mercy with one condition – Guthrum would be baptised a Christian, and Alfred would serve as godfather. Guthrum agreed – he would do anything to escape the kingdom of Wessex and its accursed king. The deed was done and the Viking king, for once, held up his side of the bargain. The two parted ways and Alfred returned to his capital in Winchester, finally free to begin rebuilding his nation.

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REVIEWS

All About History on the books, TV shows and films causing a stir in the history world

LADY CONSTANCE LYTTON: ARISTOCRAT, SUFFRAGETTE, MARTYR

We think we know the suffragettes

Author Lyndsey Jenkins **Publisher** Biteback Publishing **Price** £20 **Released** Out now

Lady Constance Lytton is no Emmeline Pankhurst or Susan B Anthony; her story is one that is not often told. It is that of one of the several women and men following the more charismatic leaders. Lady Constance's life itself, slotting easily into a wider picture of more recognisable players, highlights the social differences between a well-to-do woman becoming involved with the suffragette movement and the group of working class women involved. And this was exactly what Lady Constance wanted to highlight herself as she briefly adopted the persona of working class 'Jane Warton', to not only fight for the women's rights movement but also to expose the discrepancy between the classes in terms of their treatment of women.

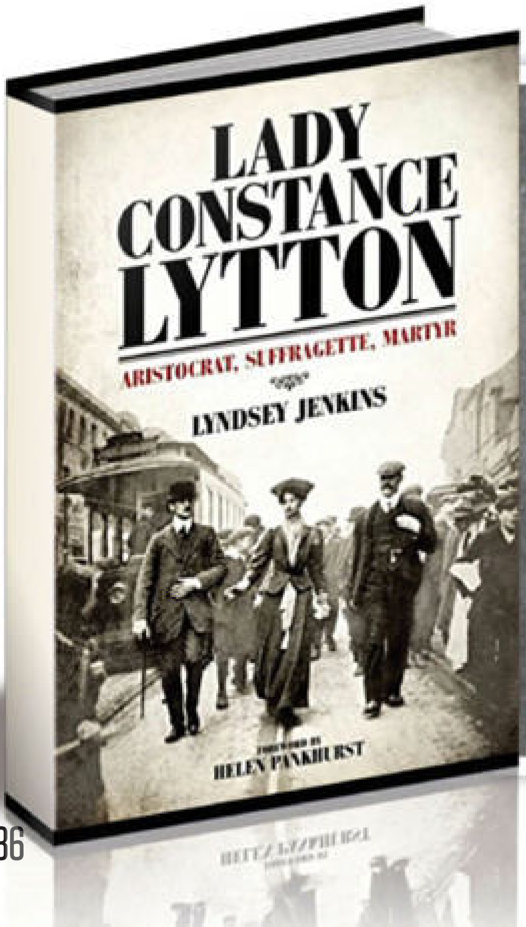
Reassuringly, Lady Constance Lytton is presented as a complete human being, flaws and all. This is not a greatest hits compilation of the suffragette's deeds - though there are several outlined in detail, and the book itself does revolve around that pivotal moment of her time spent in prison as Jane - but instead a presentation of a human being. Jenkins is a candid, honest story-teller, and therefore the narrative is utterly engaging.

There are intermittent sour notes to Lady Constance's life story, such as details of her recurring depression and involvement with charlatan Homer Lane, but then that, again, is refreshingly honest. Texts that deal with women's rights frequently fall into the trap of glorifying the men and women involved with the movement, placing them on the pedestals they were denied in the press at the time. Here, Lady Constance's motives, weaknesses and martyrdom are not revelled in, but carefully examined and dissected. Easy as it is for biographers to fall into the trap of wanting to glorify the individual they feel they have gotten to know well, Lady Constance Lytton is humanised, her shyness, awkwardness, and reluctance to engage with the majority of people detailed in full. The occasional foray into the absurd - becoming agitated that the only topic of conversation she could come up with was jam when speaking to Lord Salisbury, for example - is utterly human, and therefore considerably more fascinating than another well-meaningly biased character analysis of those involved with the suffragette movement.

The media reports at the time describe a gaggle of silly women, when in reality the suffragettes were a calculating political group managing both the cause and the image of their cause in a deeply serious manner. In times when riots and violence, sometimes co-ordinated, sometimes spontaneous, over civil rights and human liberty were commonplace, there are a surprising amount of parallels that can be drawn to the continued fight for equality between all people that is still playing out around the world today.

With its candid, honest nature (and gloriously rich foot-notes), this biography isn't just for those already interested in feminism and/or the suffragette movement, but also in the changing socioeconomic times of the turn of the transition from one century to another, how a civil rights movement gains momentum. Above all, it is a fascinating study of a handful of the potential motivations behind violent political acts through the balanced examination of a remarkable woman.

Rebecca Richards



Lady Constance Lytton was imprisoned four times for her campaigning activities

WHY DID THE CHICKEN CROSS THE WORLD?

THE EPIC SAGA OF THE BIRD THAT POWERS CIVILIZATION An eggsistential crisis

Author Andrew Lawler **Publisher** Duckworth Overlook **Price** £16.99 **Released** Out now

Of all the animals in the world, there's one in particular that we, as humans, have failed to give the recognition that it deserves: the common chicken. What started as a feature pitch to a magazine editor ended up as a concise history of the chicken through centuries gone by, and it's an insightful – albeit, slightly waffly – overview.

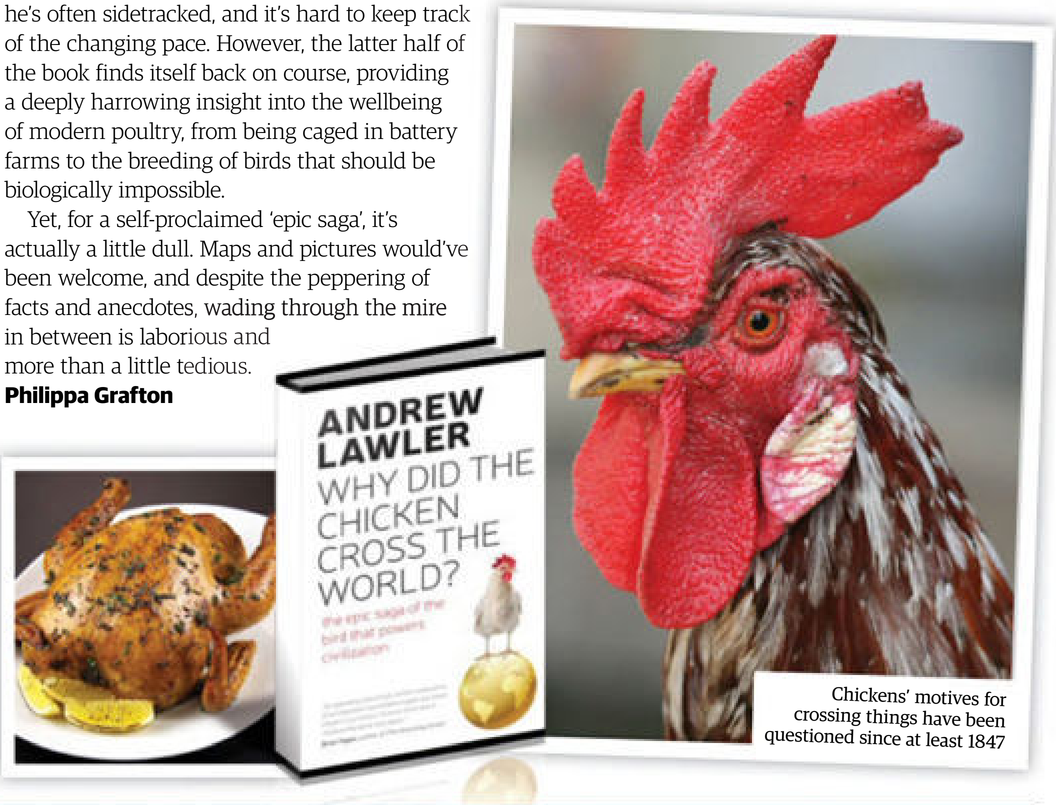
Andrew Lawler's account starts fascinatingly – the number of chickens in the world is more than dogs, cats and rats put together. In retrospect, it's not surprising – go to a supermarket and the shelves are dominated with chicken, whether it's a breast or a garlic kiev. Even just in the introduction, Lawler shames the reader for overlooking such an essential product in our day-to-day lives.

And that's exactly what the chicken is – a product. Not graced with the status of a domestic animal, while simultaneously overlooked as a farm animal, the chicken essentially has no rights. It's only in recent years that the wellbeing of chickens has come under scrutiny, and – as Lawler points out – that's centuries too late.

What starts well, however, loses pace fairly quickly, and the first few chapters of the book lack any real impact. Lawler's research is flawless, but he's often sidetracked, and it's hard to keep track of the changing pace. However, the latter half of the book finds itself back on course, providing a deeply harrowing insight into the wellbeing of modern poultry, from being caged in battery farms to the breeding of birds that should be biologically impossible.

Yet, for a self-proclaimed 'epic saga', it's actually a little dull. Maps and pictures would've been welcome, and despite the peppering of facts and anecdotes, wading through the mire in between is laborious and more than a little tedious.

Philippa Grafton


ANDREW LAWLER
WHY DID THE CHICKEN CROSS THE WORLD?
the epic saga of the bird that powers civilization

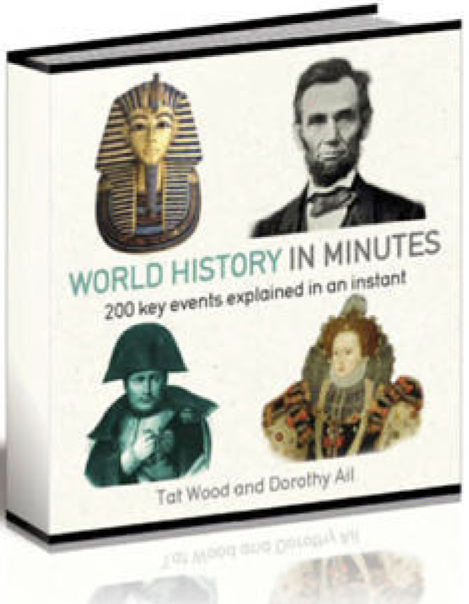
Chickens' motives for crossing things have been questioned since at least 1847

WORLD HISTORY IN MINUTES

The next best thing to intravenous learning

Authors Tat Wood and Dorothy Ail **Publisher** Quercus **Price** £8.99 **Released** Out now

Minutes, perhaps not, but a couple of hours of rapid world history assimilation might more accurately describe what this pocket-sized reference guide can offer the reader. Packed into just over 400 pages are 200 choice events from the last 5,000 years of history (plus a bit of prehistoric detail), typically a page and an illustration per event.



It crams in anything from the cradle of humanity and the death of Lucy, the ancient hominid, to Medieval wars, scientific revolutions, environmental disasters and even a bit of explaining the origins of the credit crunch (and why not?).

This is economy and succinctness defined: with a few exceptions, expansive detail on events that have proved turning points in the history of humankind have been expertly distilled into no more than 150 words, stripping out interpretation and extraneous filler to deliver a quick shot of hard, objective fact. There's not much to it to look at, but it doesn't take very much imagination to appreciate the level of work the two authors would have put into first deciding what to include and then, how to cram each inclusion down into a nutshell.

World History In Minutes forms part of a series of '...In Minutes' reference guides from Quercus and we suppose the publisher is hitting its stride here, with a paperback equivalent of a Google search. It's too general and brief even to form part of a student's cramming material, but as a quick and easily understood reference for those in a hurry or with the attention span of a gnat, it's perfect.

Ben Biggs

The remains of Lucy, who is estimated to have lived 3.2 million years ago

VE DAY: A DAY TO REMEMBER

Not quite how you remember it

Authors Craig Cabell, Allan Richards **Publisher** Pen & Sword **Price** £12.99 **Released** Out now

Victory in Europe Day remains a historical moment. Representing the end of hostilities in that part of the world, it was a time of celebration for many.

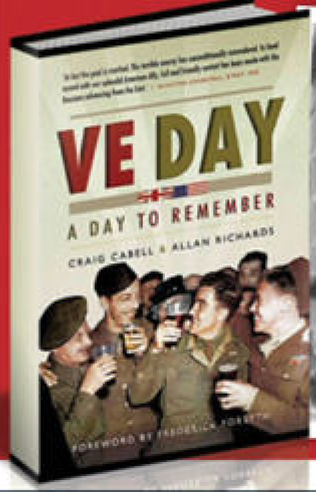
Such a momentous occasion deserves a fittingly excellent book to go with it. Unfortunately, *VE Day: A Day To Remember* isn't that tome. For a start, large portions of the text don't actually depict VE Day itself; rather they refer to the events before and during the war. There's nothing wrong with providing a bit of context, but in this instance it overshadows everything - even the purported theme of the book itself. After a while, the title ceases being accurate, and it becomes an abridged history of World War II.

Moreover, the writing itself isn't especially impressive. The prose is basic, and at times feels like a series of bullet points jumbled together rather than a smooth, continuous narrative. Like the book itself, the authors' writing style appears to lack focus, hindered by its scattershot approach.

It's a pity, because there is the basis for a very good book here. The inclusion of various recollections of VE Day and other events in the war stand out (even if a huge amount of time doesn't appear to have been dedicated to trimming these quotes down to their basic essence), with these eyewitness accounts effectively serving as the conduit needed to bring the time period to life. The relevance of the accounts vary, but ultimately they're what make this book worth coming back to.

Still, by the end, it doesn't feel like a complete story has been told. It's under 200 pages long - much of which isn't actually about VE Day at all - making it hard to shake the feeling of just how light it feels. If you're looking for the definitive VE Day book, then keep searching. This isn't it.

Steve Wright



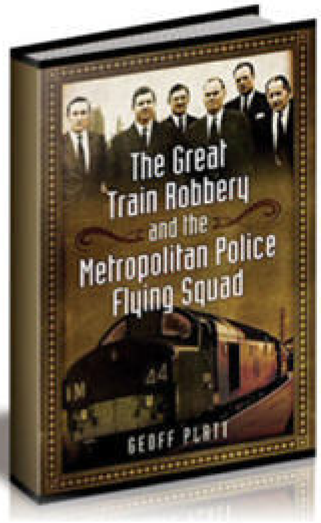
On 8 May 1945, people across the country celebrated as World War II came to a close

THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY

AND THE METROPOLITAN POLICE FLYING SQUAD

The story of the men tasked with solving the crime of the century

Author Geoff Platt **Publisher** Pen & Sword **Price** £19.99 **Released** Out now


The Great Train Robbery and the Metropolitan Police Flying Squad
GEOFF PLATT

In the 52 years since The Great Train Robbery took place, there have been countless books, newspaper articles and even films about the band of thieves who pulled off one of the most audacious crimes in living memory. The men that investigated the crime, however, have been overlooked. This wrong has been put right by Geoff Platt's thorough and insightful book *The Great Train Robbery And The Metropolitan Police Flying Squad.*

Despite only two of the investigating officers still being alive, Platt has attempted to show to the world what went on behind the scenes as everyone from the local constabulary to the highest-ranking officers at Scotland Yard tried to capture the men who had stolen more than £2.5 million from a Post Office train.

As a former policeman himself, Platt is able to provide an excellent window into the workings of the police force, drawing from his own experiences, his research and interviews with people involved with the investigation. The book takes us through the crime itself, how it was organised and how it unfolded before moving onto a roll call of the officers and criminals. It is while reading this section that it becomes clear that Platt is not a natural storyteller. Although it all reads very well and his writing is clear, concise and provides the reader with all the information they require, it would have been nice to have had some colour or narrative. Taking each officer one at a time, explaining their background and how they got involved with the investigation is all very well, but it doesn't draw you into what could have been an exciting tale of cops chasing down a group of the most famous criminals in the country.

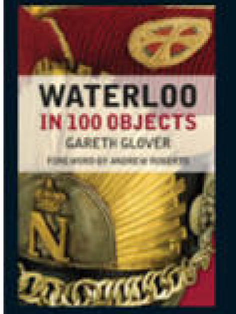
Overall, this is an insightful and well set-out book, if lacking in a little inspiration and flair.

Jamie Frier

HISTORY of WAR RECOMMENDS...

Waterloo In 100 Objects

Author: Gareth Glover **Price:** £25
Publisher: The History Press



Like a selective but creative curator, Glover has clearly taken pains to pick objects that give as wide a view of the Battle of Waterloo as possible for this insight into the famous clash. From the hat belonging to Thomas Picton to the false leg of the Earl of Uxbridge, every page presents the possibility of discovering a treasure. This book is a lot more than just a collection of objects. It is a record of the people behind them, who, thanks to these incredible artefacts, we can feel that bit closer to.

EINSTEIN'S MASTERWORK: 1915 AND THE GENERAL THEORY OF RELATIVITY

The story behind Einstein's most important work, and why it should not be overshadowed by the success of $E=mc^2$

Author John Gribbin **Publisher** Icon Books **Price** £10.99 **Released** Out now

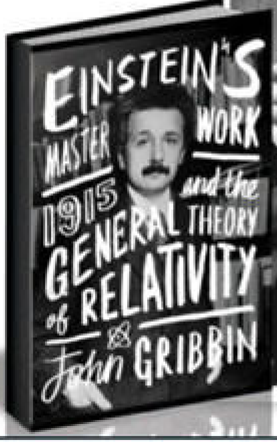
Albert Einstein was without a doubt one of the greatest scientific minds of the 20th century. While most people will be able to quote the equation of his Special Theory of relativity, $E=mc^2$, without a second thought, very few will be able to recite the basic principles of his General Theory of relativity. To John Gribbin – the acclaimed author of many popular science titles – this is a great shame, as Einstein's latter theory was arguably the achievement that deserved more recognition. This year marks the centenary of the General Theory, providing the perfect opportunity for Gribbin to shed some light on this often-overlooked work of genius.

Part biography, part "beginner's guide to relativity," *Einstein's Masterwork* explains the physicist's famous theories in the context of his life, as well as the work of his predecessors and contemporaries. There's no need for a degree in theoretical physics to fully appreciate this book, as Gribbin's writing is incredibly accessible. He avoids baffling readers with needlessly over-complicated terminology or pages of formulas and equations. After all, his mission with this book is not to demonstrate the specifics of how Einstein derived his masterwork, but to explain why the General Theory is so important.

It is in the section on Einstein's legacy in particular that the significant impact of his work is made clear. Gribbin demonstrates how so much of our understanding of the universe has its roots in the General Theory, and just how many scientists since 1915 have been inspired by Einstein's work.

Einstein's Masterwork provides an engaging evaluation of Einstein's theories on relativity, and is an ideal read for anybody who is curious about the iconic scientist's life.

Jackie Snowden



Einstein's influence can still be felt in the study of theoretical physics today

1944: THE SECOND WORLD WAR IN THE AIR IN PHOTOGRAPHS

12 months of stunning wartime photography

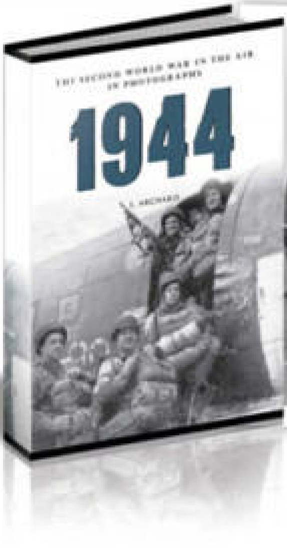
Author Louis Archard **Publisher** Amberley Publishing **Price** £15.99 **Released** Out now

Yet another release from the fantastic 'The Second World War In The Air In Photographs' series, *1944* is exactly what it says on its hardback book-shaped tin.

Performing its role perfectly, *1944* is a 12-month odyssey of superb images from the penultimate year of the war. Primarily black and white with the occasional smattering of colour imagery, the book is laid out in a monthly order and incredibly easy to follow, even if you aren't an avid reader of the book series to date. As it also includes maps, graphs and illustrations, this book is as comprehensive as it gets. For the reader who desires more information, there's even a detailed introduction that outlines the situation of the war in 1944. Highlights include a half-sunken U-boat felled by the RAF and the incredible sight of a B-17 Flying Fortress about to drop its payload. Perhaps one of the finest images though is the tail of a V2 rocket. Granted, it isn't visually impressive, but the photographer's struggle to get a clean shot illustrates just how much damage these flying bombs could have caused if introduced earlier in the war. A terrifying prospect.

It's not just about the war machines either. For instance, there's a picture of a Nazi-occupied Benedictine Abbey on top of Monte Cassino. Later in the book, it's being firebombed by Allied bombers. Refreshingly, *1944* focuses on all theatres of the war, so you get as much Operation Overlord as you get Operation Detachment. Yes, the images can get a little samey, but that's really no problem when the subject matter is so interesting. And if you want more land and sea photography, Amberley has that covered in other books. An excellent edition to a fantastic series. Roll on 1945!

Jack Griffiths



King George VI inspects a Hawker Typhoon Mk IB

Where is this?

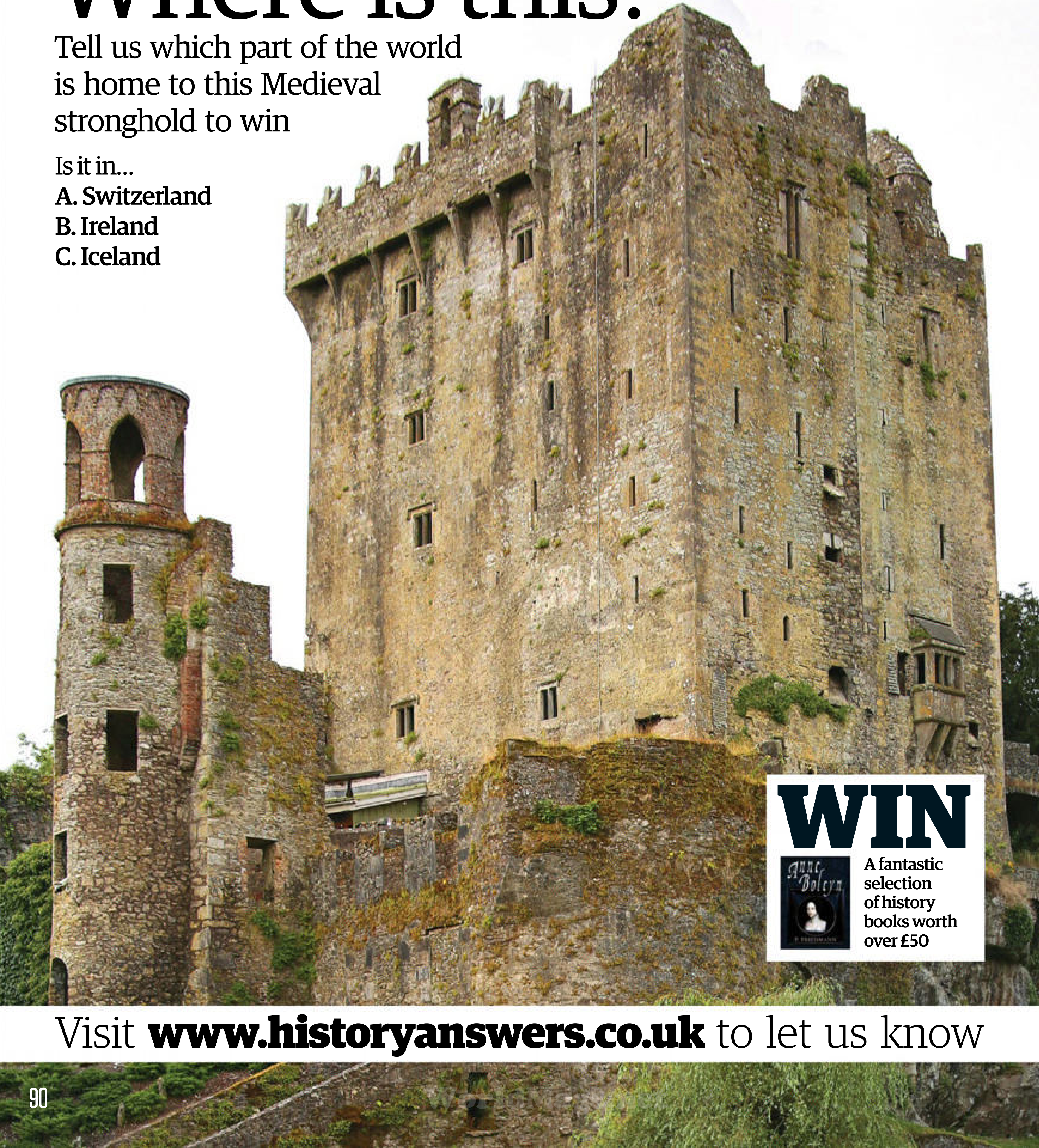
Tell us which part of the world is home to this Medieval stronghold to win

Is it in…

A. Switzerland

B. Ireland

C. Iceland



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As many as 80 million soldiers and civilians died during World War II, but this figure could have been even higher if the Enigma code hadn't been cracked

ALAN TURING

Nationality: British

Born-died: 1912-54

Brief Bio

Turing was a pioneering mathematician and cryptographer. He developed intricate machines called 'bombes' in order to decode the Nazis' transmissions in World War II. He also completed work that formed the basis of modern computer science, and contemplated the possibility of artificial intelligence in machines. Tragically, Turing committed suicide at the age of 41.

How do we know breaking the Enigma code saved lives?

Sara Lincoln, St Albans

Had Alan Turing and his colleagues at Bletchley Park not cracked the Enigma code in 1940, historians estimate that World War II could have lasted until 1948. Based on an average of about seven million deaths each year in Europe during the war, this suggests that between 14 and 21 million lives were saved.

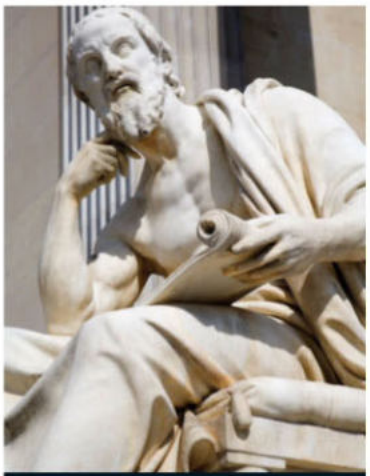
These estimates are based on several factors. The decrypted messages revealed the positions of U-boats in the Atlantic, which were destroying convoys delivering food supplies to Britain. Knowing the locations of the deadly Nazi fleets helped cargo ships plot safe courses, saving many Britons from the brink of starvation. Breaking the U-boat stronghold also contributed to the success of the D-Day landings, because any delay in the Allied invasion of Europe would have given Hitler time to prepare stronger defences. If that were the case, it would have taken the Allies much longer to liberate occupied territories and eventually reach Berlin.

Of course, there is no way of knowing exactly when the war would have ended had the code remained a mystery. It is possible that the Allies may have eventually decided to use atomic bombs against Berlin as they did in Japan.

Who was Herodotus?

Lucy Dallas, Bury

Often referred to as 'the father of history', Herodotus was a Greek historian who lived during the 5th century BCE. His writings, *The Histories*, were an investigation into the Greco-Persian war and are among the earliest known examples of historical research. This collection of accounts included many details of life at the time, including descriptions of festivals and religious rituals. However, some historians, both ancient and modern, have criticised Herodotus's work, claiming that it is unreliable and contains inaccurate information. That said, several archaeological discoveries support some of Herodotus's claims that were previously considered to be fanciful storytelling.



Historians have argued over whether Herotodus was the 'father of history' or the 'father of lies'

This day in history 25 June

841

Battle of Fontenoy

After Charlemagne's successor, Louis the Pious, died, the Carolingian empire was divided between his sons. Disputing the decision, the brothers go to war. The Battle of Fontenoy is one of many brutal conflicts.

1608

Treaty of Lieben

Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II signs an agreement to surrender the territories of Hungary, Moravia and areas of Austria to his brother Matthias in return for control of Tyrol and Vorland.

1876

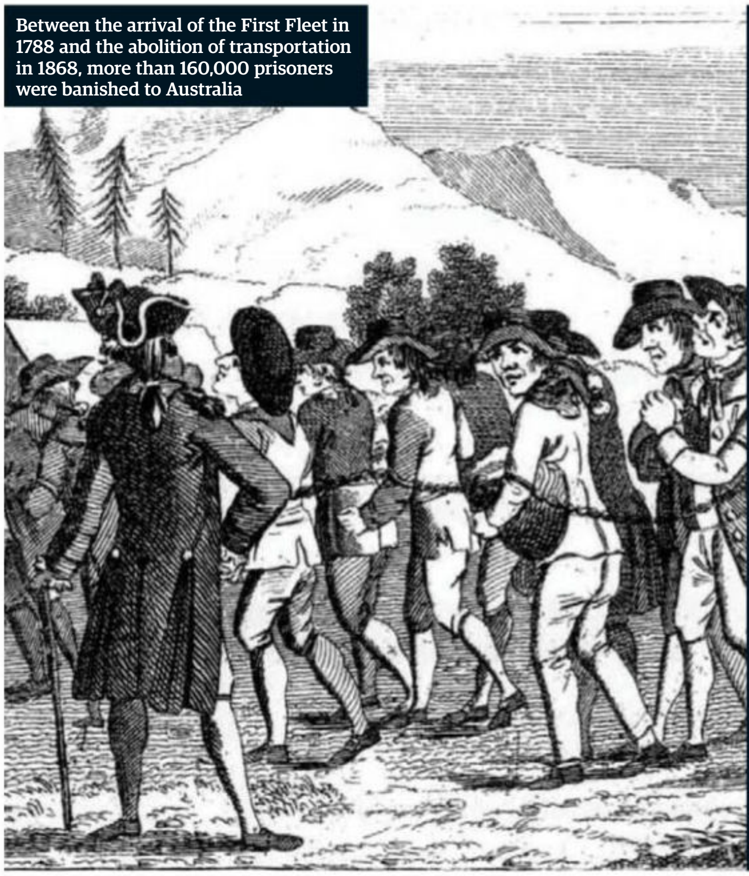
Custer's last stand

The most famous event of the Great Sioux War, the Battle of the Little Bighorn begins. It will result in a victory for the Native American tribes against a cavalry regiment of the United States Army.

1900

Dunhuang manuscripts discovered

Daoist monk Wang Yuanlu finds a collection of about 40,000 manuscripts, which are preserved in a sealed cave. The documents range in age from throughout the first millennium, providing scholars with a valuable insight into ancient Oriental culture.



Between the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788 and the abolition of transportation in 1868, more than 160,000 prisoners were banished to Australia

Why was Australia used as a prisoner colony?

Kevin Gennaro, Leeds

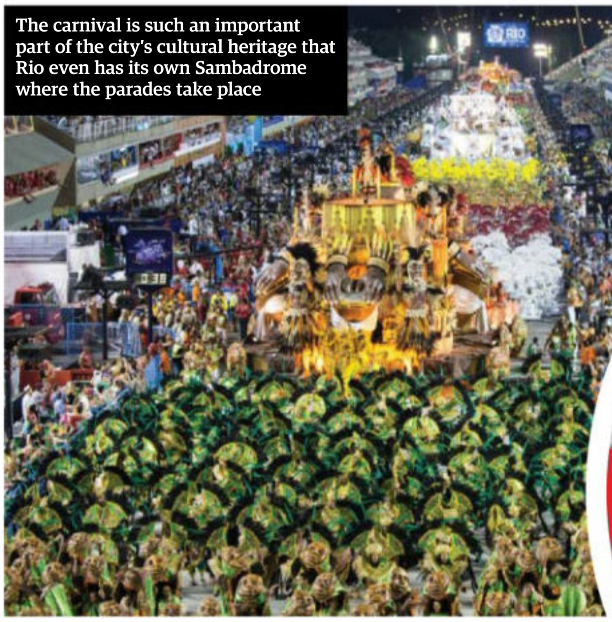
Since the introduction of the Transportation Act in 1718, the British Empire used some of its overseas territories as penal colonies where they could send exiled criminals. It was believed that transportation could help offenders reform; although the punishment was mainly intended to be a deterrent, it had the added benefit of removing dangerous people from society.

After the American Revolution of 1776, sending prisoners to North America was no longer an option, and this led to prisons back home becoming overcrowded. To solve this problem, the British Government turned its attention to the recently discovered land down under. Establishing a new penal colony in New South Wales - claimed as British territory by Captain Cook in 1770 - would serve this purpose, as well as expand the empire. Some historians argue that Australia's valuable natural resources, and its potential use as a trading outpost, also influenced the government's decision.

How did the Rio carnival begin?

Jennifer McLane, Edinburgh

The origins of the world's biggest carnival date back to the 18th century, when Portuguese immigrants brought with them the tradition of 'entrudo', a huge water fight in the streets that took place before Lent. Over the years, the festivities evolved to include parades and masquerade balls. After slavery was abolished in 1888, the Afro-Brazilian population introduced the iconic samba music and dance styles, which soon became integral to both the carnival and Brazilian culture.



The carnival is such an important part of the city's cultural heritage that Rio even has its own Sambadrome where the parades take place

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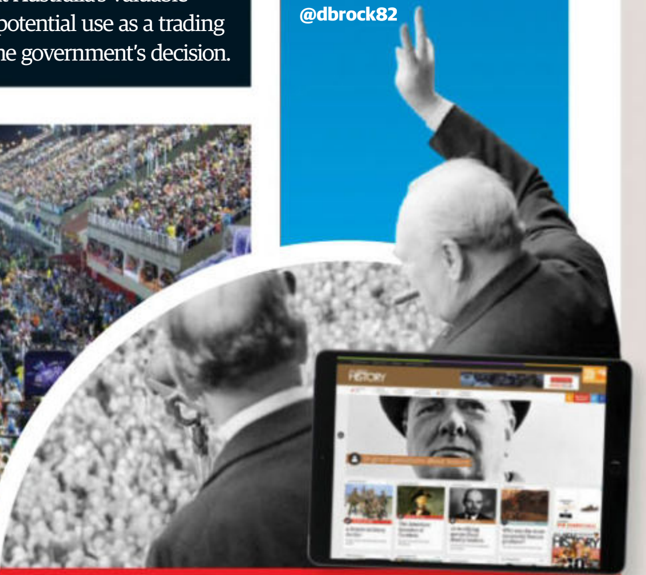

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1940

France surrenders
The ceasefire between France and the invading German and Italian forces comes into effect. France signed an armistice agreement with Germany after Hitler's blitzkrieg tactics overwhelmed French forces in just six weeks of conflict.

1947

Frank's diary published
The first edition of Anne Frank's diary, detailing the time she spent in the secret annex, is published by a company in Amsterdam. It has since been translated into more than 70 languages.

1950

Korean War begins
After months of tension between the two sides, North Korean forces invade South Korea, marking the beginning of a war that will last three years and cost millions of lives.

1975

Independence of Mozambique
After almost 500 years of colonial rule, Mozambique achieves independence from Portugal. The new government, led by socialist president Samora Machel, divides the population and sparks a 15-year civil war.

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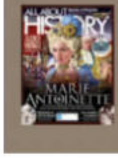

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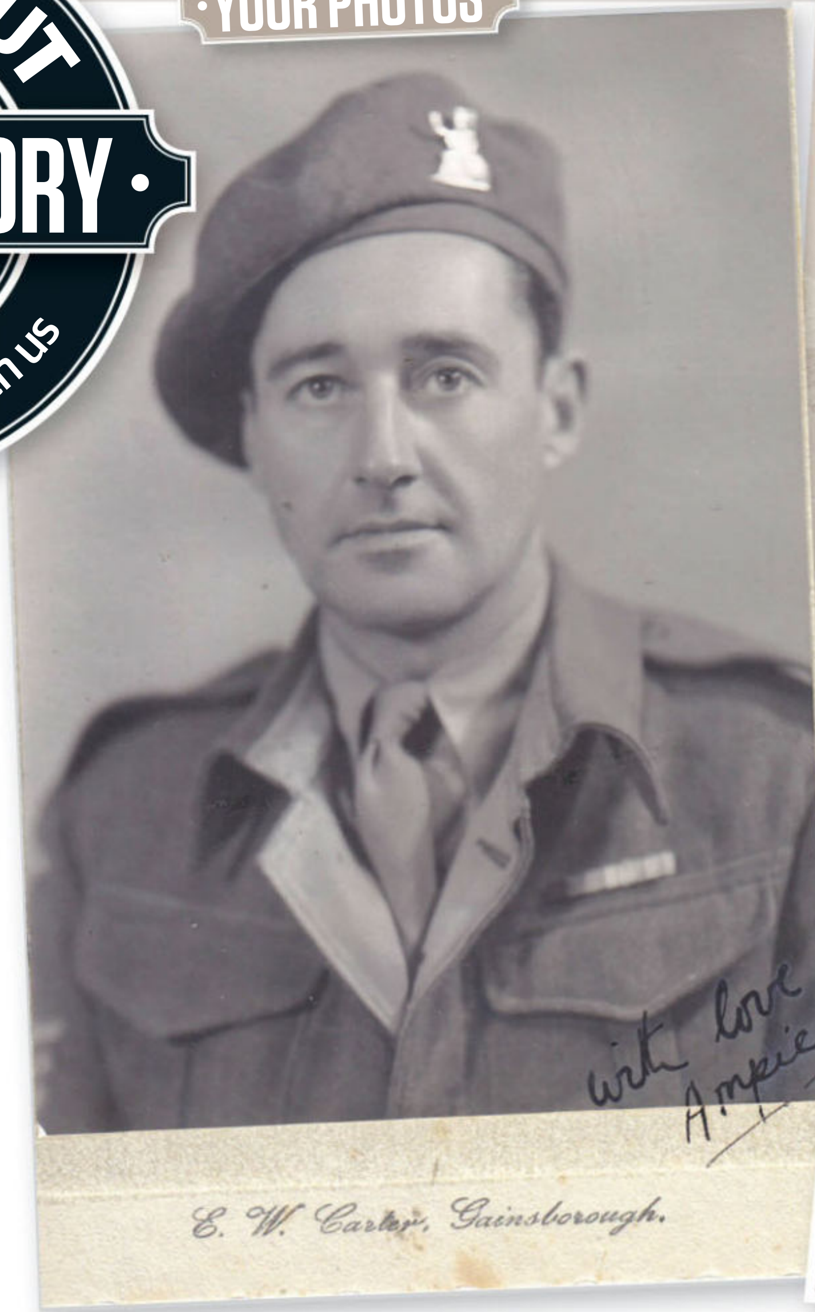


Below: This tin was engraved by an inmate at the Chungkai POW camp and given to Taylor as a gift

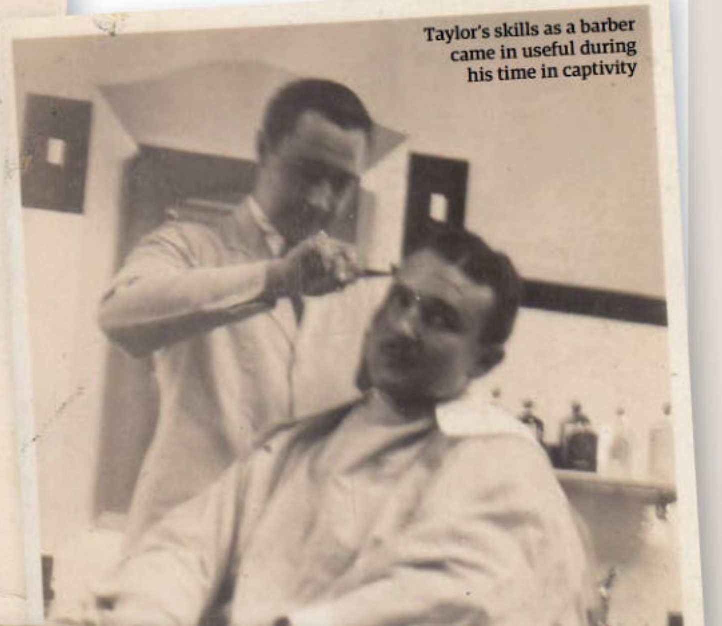
Diary of a POW

Lily Taylor

I would like to share the story of my Great Granddad Richard Amhurst 'Ampie' Taylor. Although he died before I was born, he is a great inspiration to me. He served in the 6th Royal Norfolk Regiment and was posted to Malaya in 1942 after serving in the Middle East. However, after being there for a little over a month, Ampie, along with hundreds of thousands of Allied troops, was taken prisoner by Japanese forces. He was taken to Japan and forced to work on the infamous Thai-Burma railway. He stayed in six different prisoner of war camps including Changi, Wan Run Thailand, Tarki-Len, Chungkai and Arrow Hill. He was finally transferred to Tamuang, where he was rescued in 1945. He wrote a war diary about his time as a POW.

Send your memories to: @ allabouthistory@imagine-publishing.co.uk

Taylor setting out for a picnic before the war


Taylor's skills as a barber came in useful during his time in captivity

General Percival decided we must surrender, if only to protect the 700,000 civilians in the town. The news came to us as a real shock. Somehow, when you go to war, you expect to be wounded possibly, or even killed, but the idea of being taken prisoner never crossed people's minds. Many men sat down and cried. I think the Japanese were much more embarrassed than we were. They never expected to take so many prisoners and seemed at a loss to know what to do with us. We made the journey to Siam in closed metal rice trucks, filthy, dirty and crawling with weevils. The trip on the railway northwards took four days. Four days packed in, 32 to a truck, so you couldn't sit up properly or lie down. Four days when it was so hot you couldn't lean against the sides of the trucks, while in the evening the temperature dropped and we just shivered in the cold night air.

Eventually we stopped at a town in Siam called Ban Pong. A real musical comedy place, with hundreds of Thais running about in all sorts of fancy uniforms. The Japanese marched us off through the town carrying all our kit until we reached a bamboo camp on the outskirts. The state of the camp was indescribable. Some of the huts had collapsed, the monsoon had caused the latrines to overflow into others, and the whole place was running with bedbugs and lice. We were lucky to spend only one night there before marching off carrying all our kit along the 40-odd miles of road that led to Kanburi, the river and the jungle.

Little did we know when we marched through the town of Kanburi that it would be the last civilised place we should see until 1945. We crossed the river and marched on a few kilometres, moving all the time into thicker jungle, until suddenly, we found ourselves in a large clearing by the river bank, where huts were going up. This was Chunkai, our new camp.

I went back to my old love, hair cutting. I had been lucky enough, at the capitulation, to save some of my kit with my barber's tools in it. From the start I was greatly in demand, because we had few trained barbers, and even under those conditions most men liked to keep their hair cut, for coolness' sake if nothing else. For many months I had work like the others on the railway, digging out earth and piling it up for an embankment, blasting and clearing rock, and laying rails and sleepers. My hair cutting was done at night. The British CO of the camp sent for me. "Sergeant Taylor" he said. "I want you to cut the men's hair. We need a barber's shop; I want you to create one." Simple enough in London, but no mean task for me out there surrounded by jungle.

The first thing I did was to appeal for barbers. Some men came forward and I tried them out. Few of them had much idea of the techniques, but were a willing lot, and I thought I'd have a bash at teaching them. The next thing was a site. We chose it under a group of trees, cleared the space and began to make our chairs out of wood with the aid of the camp carpenters. These chairs I designed as close as possible to the 'Simpson' model.

Our collection of tools was a motley one: several old pairs of scissors, some broken combs, and a dozen or so cut-throat razors of every known make. It took me many hours of experimenting with one of the chemists in the hospital laboratory, before we hit on a formula for shaving soap. But in spite of all these difficulties we had a great success. People flocked to 'Simpson's of Siam', as they called it, for their early-morning shave and fortnightly haircut.

Soon we had a staff of 41 barbers, trainees and latherers to deal with 12,000 customers. Simpson's of Siam became a centre of camp news and views. We were put under contract to the Camp Theatre as wig makers and make up experts; we took our fee in fruit. I used to make the wigs out of old Scotch sporrans, cow's tails and even bits of string. Simpson's of Siam ran most successfully for two years under its roof of trees. During that time we made 11,000 Thai dollars for the camp welfare fund and the sick.

In March 1945 we had to close since the camp was being evacuated. The Allies were on their way to us and the Japanese wanted every available man up the line on repair work. I was detailed in charge of a party and said goodbye to those who had helped me turn an idea into reality.

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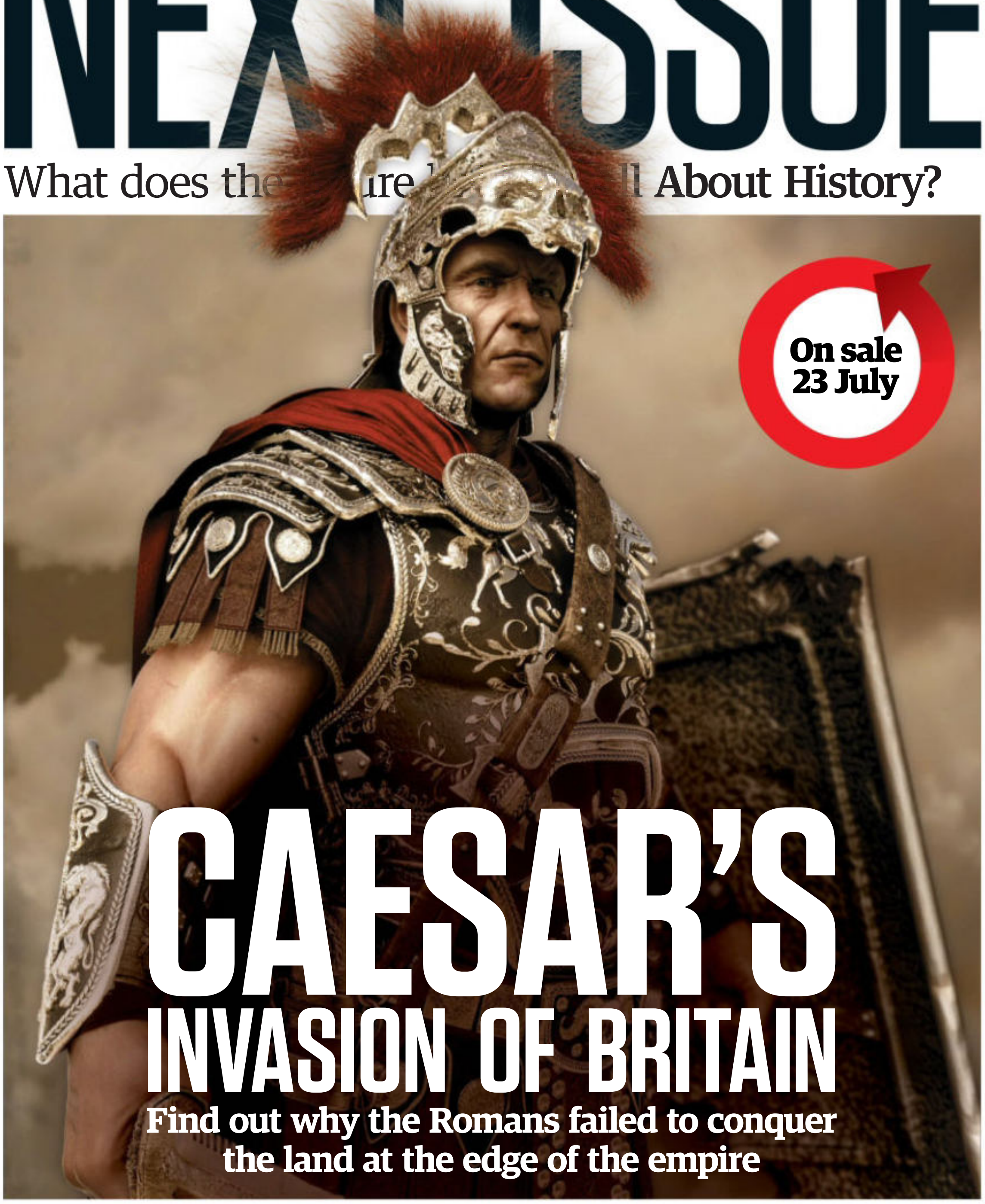

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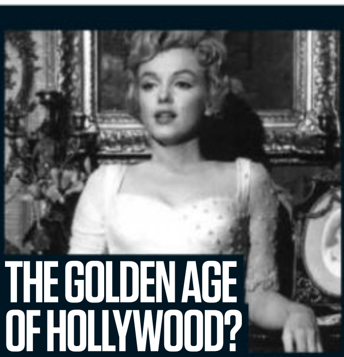

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HISTORY VS HOLLYWOOD

Fact versus fiction on the silver screen

MARIE ANTOINETTE

B

Director: Sofia Coppola **Starring:** Kirsten Dunst, Jason Schwartzman, Rip Torn **Country:** USA **Released:** 2006

Is this film a revolutionary new look at the life of the French queen?

VERDICT A mostly accurate account of French court life, artistic license aside.

WHAT THEY GOT WRONG…

01 In the movie, Marie and Louis are depicted as having three children, as seen in the painting. Their youngest daughter did die as insinuated by the changing picture. But they actually had four children, and in the original painting Louis-Charles was on Marie's lap.

02 Treating Marie and Fersen's affair as fact in the film is not necessarily a sin, as historians argue about this. However, Fersen remained a very key part of the queen's life. In the movie he disappears after going to war and is only glimpsed in the queen's daydreams.

03 We can only assume that Louis and Marie's bedroom rendezvous were as awkward as the movie depicts, the evidence being the lack of an heir for seven years. But they almost certainly did not share a bedchamber, as is witnessed frequently in the film.

04 The depiction of the queen in general is a little off the mark. Yes, she was a foreign princess thrust into French court life, but she was a quick learner and a determined woman. The film's depiction of a naïve girl is more inspired by the stories in the libelles than fact.

WHAT THEY GOT RIGHT…

The scene where Marie is 'delivered' to the French on the border and stripped of every piece of clothing then redressed in the French style is surprisingly accurate. This was common practice for any noble that wished to ingratiate themselves into French life, and almost certainly expected of a dauphine of France.

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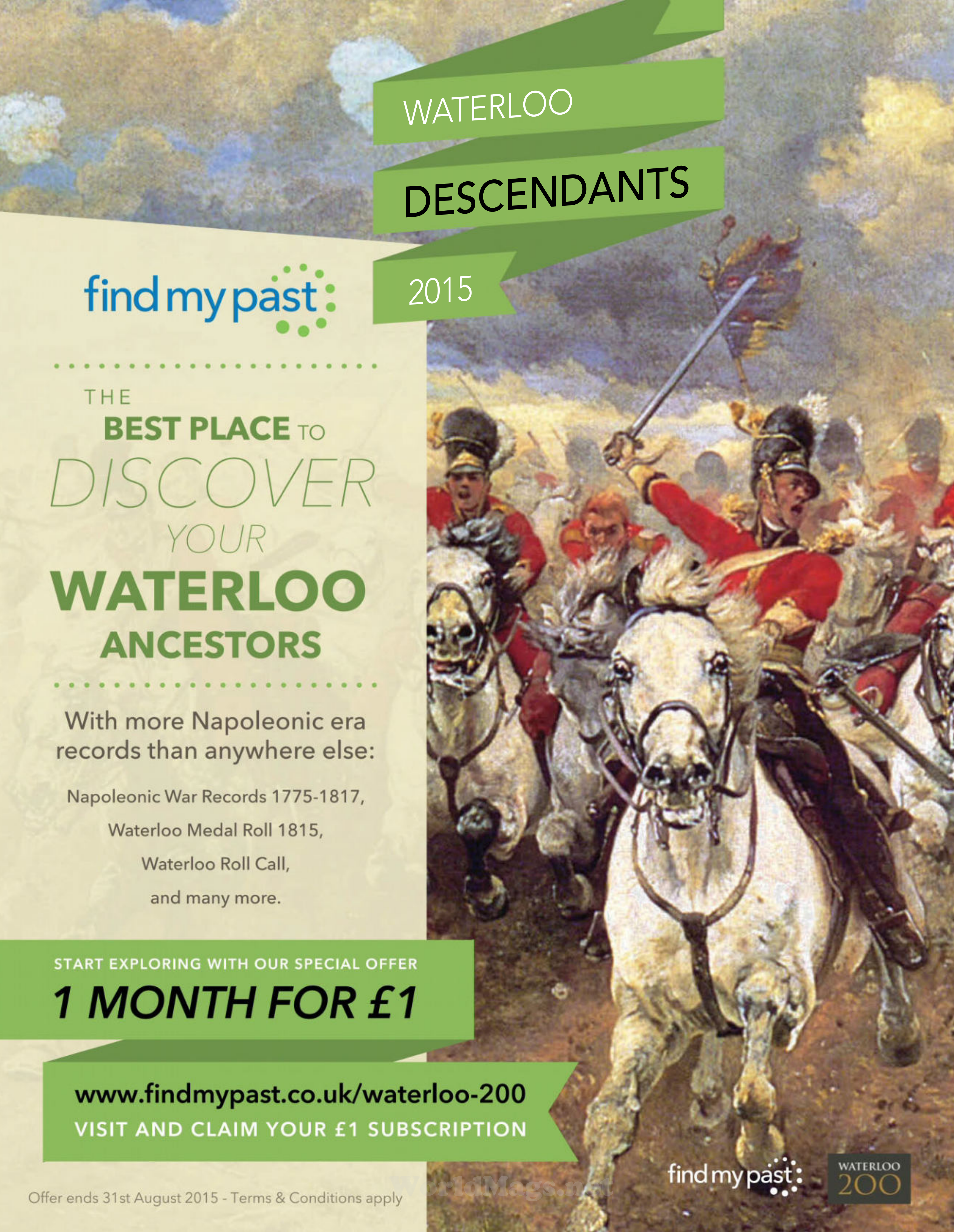

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